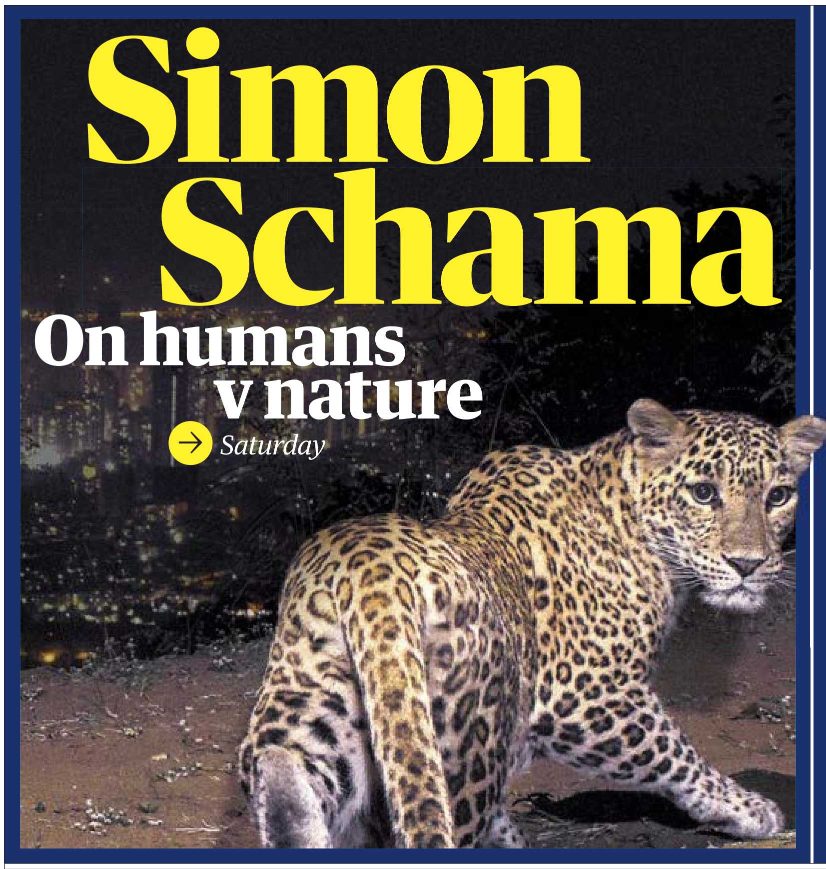


# Simon Schama

## On humans v nature

→ *Saturday*

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## Delicious breakfasts

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# The Guardian

Saturday
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Newspaper of the year


# Expect Blair-style reforms 'on steroids', says Starmer

Labour must be more radical because of scale of crisis facing UK, party leader will say today

**Rowena Mason**
**Peter Walker**

Labour will have to offer voters a radical general election vision that "goes further and deeper" than Tony Blair's government because of the scale of the crisis facing the country, Keir Starmer will say today.

The Labour leader will give a speech saying reforms are necessary because an incoming Labour government will have a bigger task than Blair. Starmer likened the scale of the changes he would make as akin to "clause IV - on steroids".

"If you think our job in 1997 was to rebuild a crumbling public realm, that in 1964 it was to modernise an economy overly dependent on the kindness of strangers, in 1945 to build a new Britain, in a volatile world, out of the trauma of collective sacrifice, in 2024 it will have to be all three," he will say.

He will highlight Blair's controversial move to rewrite the Labour constitution in 1995 known as clause IV - ditching the party's then commitment to mass nationalisation - in a landmark shift of the party towards the centre ground.

"This is about taking our party back to where we belong and where

> *'This project goes further than New Labour's rewriting of clause IV'*
>
> **Keir Starmer**
> *in speech today*

we should always have been … back doing what we were created to do," he will tell the Progressive Britain conference.

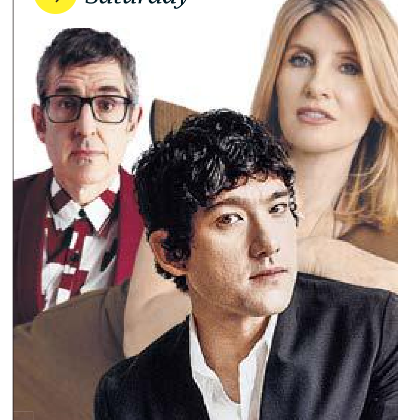
"That's why I say this project goes further and deeper than New Labour's rewriting of clause IV… This is about rolling our sleeves up, changing our entire culture - our DNA. This is clause IV - on steroids."

Starmer's speech signalling an even more reforming agenda for Labour than Blair is likely to alarm those on the party's left who are already angered by the leader's decision to drop pledges on tuition fees and nationalisation of utilities. The Labour leader has 8 →

*Bafta special*

## Stars of our favourite TV shows

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## 'I rescued 100 dogs from a fire'

→ *Saturday*



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**13/05/2023**

**News**

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# Royal Mail boss to step down following bitter dispute with unions

**Alex Lawson**

The head of Royal Mail is stepping down after only two years following an acrimonious tussle with unions.

Simon Thompson, who took the top job in early 2021, will stay on until the end of October as the postal company seeks its fourth boss in four years. Royal Mail's parent company, International Distributions Services, said it was in the advanced stages of appointing a new chief executive.

Royal Mail agreed a deal over pay and working patterns last month after a year-long battle with the Communication Workers Union (CWU), during which Thompson was accused of inflaming the industrial dispute.

Thompson said yesterday: "I have been incredibly proud to lead Royal Mail during this crucial period in its 507-year history. The changes we have made, the infrastructure we have put in place and the agreements negotiated with our trade unions mean Royal Mail now has a chance to compete and grow.

"That is what I have always wanted, and it is now the right time to hand over to a new CEO to deliver the next stage of the company's reinvention. I would like to thank my team for their support during a difficult and important time of change."

The company said Thompson would continue to receive his salary, worth £525,000 a year, until the end of October. After that, he will receive almost £290,000 in lieu of notice and a further £67,500 in relation to his departure. He will remain eligible for a bonus this financial year.

The former Ocado and Apple executive, who led the much-maligned Covid NHS test and trace scheme, has faced bruising attacks this year.

First, the former Royal Mail boss Rico Back questioned his experience and handling of the dispute with unions, which led to days of strike action and major disruption in the run-up to Christmas. He was later accused of "incompetence or cluelessness" by MPs on the business committee after appearing before them in January and being recalled over questions about his evidence.

This month, Sky News reported that Thompson was poised to resign, citing sources who claimed he had become disillusioned with the job. The company was also thrown into crisis this year when a ransomware attack disrupted deliveries.

**£525,000**

*Simon Thompson's salary. He will also get £290,000 in lieu of notice and is eligible for a bonus*

Thompson was on the board of Royal Mail as a non-executive before he was appointed by the chair, Keith Williams, who said: "On behalf of the board, I would like to thank Simon for his significant contribution over more than five years at Royal Mail, both as CEO and previously as a non-executive director of the board. As CEO, his leadership, resilience and unwavering drive to ensure that Royal Mail transforms for the benefit of our customers means we have set a clear path to turn the business around.

The CWU general secretary, Dave Ward, said: "Simon Thompson is one of the key individuals responsible for the financial crisis that Royal Mail Group has created over the course of the last year. However, we recognise that the chief executive was only one of the senior leadership team responsible for the unacceptable actions and behaviours of managers … Further change in Royal Mail group's leadership team is vital.

"It is important that the next Royal Mail group chief executive is somebody who understands the only way to turn around the fortunes of the company is by taking the workforce with them."




*A handful of passengers wait at London King's Cross station during yesterday's strike by train drivers*
PHOTOGRAPH: YUI MOK/PA WIRE

# Passengers to face second day of disruption as train crews strike

**Gwyn Topham**
*Transport correspondent*

Passengers will face another day of disruption on Britain's railways today as train crews stage a 24-hour strike immediately after yesterday's action by drivers.

Ministers again urged unions to put below-inflation pay offers to their members, but Labour said the government had "guaranteed a weekend of chaos" by refusing to hold talks.

Many more trains will run than yesterday, but most networks will see a very limited service as RMT union members at 14 train operating companies in England stage a strike.

A large number of smaller stations from the north to the south-east will close, while in many places services will end by 7pm.

In Wales and Scotland, where unions are not in dispute, only cross-border services will be affected.

Unions have denied targeting tonight's Eurovision final, which will see thousands of people travelling to Liverpool for an event hosted on behalf of Ukraine. Merseyrail, which is not affected by strikes, is running services but intercity trains will terminate earlier.

The RMT said today had been chosen as it was the last remaining date legally allowed under its existing strike mandate. Members have now voted to keep striking for another six months if necessary.

Mick Whelan, the general secretary of the train drivers' union Aslef, said yesterday he had been unaware Eurovision had semi-finals that would be affected by strikes, but added: "If somebody can name me a day where there's not an event that isn't going to get a hit at some point if there's any form of disruption, I'd love to know."

The rail minister, Huw Merriman, again urged the RMT and Aslef leadership to put the pay offers to a full vote, but unions have accused the government of hampering a deal.

Whelan said that they "neither had hide nor hair from the government that are meant to be facilitating and aiding these talks" since a meeting with Merriman on 6 January. The transport secretary, Mark Harper, has not met unions this year.

The RMT general secretary, Mick Lynch, said earlier this week that the government had tied the hands of the railway companies and prevented them offering a fair deal.

The Rail Delivery Group, representing train operators, has said it was "blindsided" by the RMT rejecting its last offer, which it claimed had been agreed by both sides in the negotiating room.

The shadow transport secretary, Louise Haigh, said: "The Conservatives' irresponsible approach is guaranteeing a weekend of chaos, and it's the public will pay the price."

Trains will also be disrupted next week, the industry has warned, due to an overtime ban brought in across 15 operating companies by Aslef from 15-20 May inclusive. Rail firms have warned it could mean more cancellations and delays, and could particularly affect passengers travelling in and out of London.

Two further strikes are planned by drivers on 31 May and 3 June, the date of the FA Cup final.

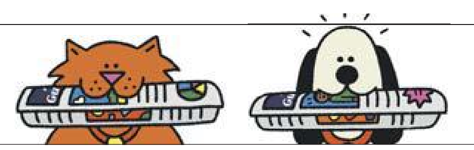
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# Fancy your own Rembrandt? Have it inked on your arm at museum's new tattoo studio



A Rembrandt self-portrait. He died in 1669

**Senay Boztas**
*Amsterdam*

Artists may suffer for their art but now audiences can feel the pain too, thanks to a temporary tattoo studio at the Rembrandt House Museum in Amsterdam where Rembrandt van Rijn lived, painted and taught.

In one of the more extreme attempts to attract a younger audience post Covid, the newly renovated museum is launching a "poor man's Rembrandt project" for a week in June. Celebrated tattoo artists from the studio Schiffmacher & Veldhoen will be the "artists in residence", offering original tattoos costing from €100 to €250 (£220), inspired by the 17th century Dutch master's etchings, self-portraits and signature.

"It's about bringing the low-brow world into the high-brow world," said tattoo artist Henk Schiffmacher, also known as "Hanky Panky".

"An Amsterdam tattoo has become a form of pilgrimage. At first, people from abroad wanted the three crosses and then gradually they started asking for a little Rembrandt or the Rembrandt House, one of the most famous houses in Amsterdam."

His studio approached museums with the idea of working together and encountered an enthusiastic reception. "The poor man's Rembrandt is a title picked up from a very old English tattoo artist," he said.

"You are making a bit of art for people who otherwise would not collect art at all. And the Rembrandt technique involves scratching with a drypoint needle on copper, so now people's skin will be the etching plate."

Milou Halbesma, the director of the Rembrandt House Museum, said the tattoo project fitted with the museum's ambition to embrace diverse modern artists.

"We are always looking for projects to connect with Amsterdam but also with craftsmanship," she said. "We see ourselves as the artists' house. Rembrandt was not just living there and working there, but also teaching his pupils.

"We want to work in our new studio space with Dutch artists to connect with the public – and we consider Schiffmacher and Veldhoen artists. It's about the challenge for every museum: to reach the next generation."

Time slots from 19-25 June are filling up fast. "It's a huge success already," said Schiffmacher. "Next on the list is the studio of Francis Bacon!"

Dutch museums have been experimenting with surprising collaborations to reach new audiences and tempt people back to museums – which, says the director of the Dutch museum association, Vera Carasso, suffered particularly as they "were closed for the longest period in Europe" during the pandemic.

The Van Gogh Museum had collaborated on clothing with the trendy, local streetwear brand The Daily Paper in 2020, and last month the Rijksmuseum launched a selection of Vermeer clothes and surfboards with New Amsterdam Surf Association. "When the values of a brand you are working with are compatible with the values of your museum, it's not really a problem," said Carasso.

A separate, blockbuster Amsterdam exhibition of Vermeer at the Rijksmuseum – running until 4 June – has proved to be a magnet for visitors from all over the world. Tickets to see 27 of the Delft 17th-century master Johannes Vermeer's 37 works still in existence sold out within three days of the opening in February. A second release of tickets was snapped up within a few days, and the museum announced a lottery for the chance to buy the 2,600 last tickets for the final weekend.

Small hiccups such as a dispute about the attribution of Girl with a Flute, protests that Girl with a Pearl Earring was only on loan for eight weeks before returning to The Hague, and packed viewings have not stopped local and international visitors raving about the exhibition.

Appropriately for the museum that holds one of the Netherlands' most famous artworks, Rembrandt's Night Watch, the final tickets for the Vermeer exhibition will be something of a night watch in themselves. The museum will open until 2am on Friday 2 June and Saturday 3 June, and the evening showing start times will range from 9.30pm until half past midnight.



▲ *Some of the Rembrandt tattoo designs, inspired by etchings* IMAGES: HENK SCHIFFMACHER & VELDHOEN/MUSEUM REMBRANDTHUIS





▲ *Arms can be tattooed with images of the Dutch master at the museum*

# Swift fans disappointed as mystery over secret new book revealed

**Sian Cain and agencies**

The guessing game began this week when a mysteriously untitled book appeared, scheduled for publication in July and known only as "4C Untitled Flatiron Nonfiction Summer 2023". It quickly became a bestseller when Taylor Swift fans began feverishly speculating that it was her surprise memoir.

Now the mystery has been solved, with publisher Flatiron Books bringing forward an announcement by a month to reveal that the book's subject is actually another musical powerhouse: K-pop boyband BTS.

Beyond the Story: 10-Year Record of BTS is written by the journalist Myeongseok Kang along with the seven members of the group – RM, Jin, Suga, J-Hope, Jimin, V and Jungkook. It has been translated into English by Anton Hur, with Clare Richards and Slin Jung.

Rumours began to spread when US booksellers shared news that an untitled book with a huge initial print run of 1m copies was coming on 9 July and that they had been required to sign an affidavit to stock copies on publication day. It would have "global appeal," its publisher said.

The few available details were read as clues by fans of Swift and of BTS. The subject was initially set to be revealed on 13 June; 13 is Swift's favourite number, but the date is also the 10th anniversary of BTS's first single. The book was said to have 544 pages; 5-4-4 also adds up to 13. The publication date, 9 July, falls two days after the release of Swift's upcoming album, Speak Now (Taylor's Version). But it is also the 10-year anniversary of "army day", marking the founding of BTS's fan base.

Speculation about the book made it a bestseller on Amazon and Barnes & Noble this week, as fans of Swift and BTS placed pre-orders.

*Additional reporting*
**Associated Press**



▲ *Rumours that Swift was about to publish her memoirs proved false*

# ‘Skipping to her death’: man convicted of murdering seven-year-old girl 31 years ago

**Mark Brown**
*North of England correspondent*

A child killer who evaded justice for more than 30 years was found guilty of murder yesterday. David Boyd took seven-year-old Nikki Allan to an abandoned building where he beat her with a brick and repeatedly stabbed her to death in 1992.

The wrong man was charged and found not guilty after a trial. Scientific breakthroughs enabled police to forensically link Boyd to the crime.

Yesterday a jury at Newcastle crown court found Boyd, 55, guilty of murder. Cries of “yes” and “you bastard” could be heard in the public gallery, with family members hugging as the verdict came in after two-and-a-half hours deliberation.

Boyd, of Stockton-on-Tees, was 25 at the time of the crime and the partner of a woman who babysat Nikki. He lived on the same floor of maisonettes as Nikki’s grandparents.

The court heard that Nikki must have known her killer and was lured to her death. One witness described seeing a young girl skipping alongside a man, now known to be Boyd.

The prosecutor, Richard Wright KC, told the court: “The little girl would occasionally drop behind and would then skip to catch up. This was Nikki Allan. She was with her killer and she was unwittingly skipping to her death.”

The court heard that Boyd had forced Nikki through the boarded-up window of a derelict warehouse, killed her and tried to hide her body in a cellar.



▲ *David Boyd was the partner of a woman who babysat Nikki Allan*

Boyd denied murder but Wright, summing up the prosecution case, said: “He crushed her skull with a brick and he pulled up her top and exposed her chest and stabbed her again and again and again.

“And then he dragged her down into that cellar, with her head bouncing off every step as he went.”

After a reinvestigation and a mass DNA screening of people in the area, police arrested Boyd in 2018. He claimed his DNA may have been on Nikki because he spat from the balcony of his flat while she played below. But the prosecution suggested that the argument did not stack up.

None of Boyd’s DNA was found on Nikki’s coat but traces that were a one-in-28,000 match were found on her cycling shorts, and a one-in-5,100 match on her T-shirt, the court heard.

“It is the clothing that her killer would have inevitably had to handle when forcing her into the building, picking her up inside and manhandling her,” Wright said.

The court heard evidence that Boyd had once admitted to a probation officer to having sexual fantasies about naked young girls.

His previous convictions included a breach of the peace in 1986 after approaching four children aged eight to 10, grabbing one and asking for a kiss. In 1999, he was convicted of indecently assaulting a nine-year-old girl who was playing in a park by asking lewd questions and groping her.

Boyd chose not to give evidence at the trial.

After the verdict DCS Lisa Theaker, the senior investigating officer in the case, said Nikki Allan would have been 37 and who knows what her life could have been.

“This is a huge day for Nikki’s family,” she said. “I would like to thank them for their incredible strength - after 30 years, they have justice.” Theaker said new forensic techniques were a key part of what had been “a complex and challenging case”.

It has been alleged that Boyd had slipped through the net because police were convinced another neighbour, George Heron, was responsible for the crime. He was charged, and fervour in the north-east of England was so heightened that it was decided the trial should be held in Leeds.

Boyd will be sentenced on 23 May.



◀ *Sharon Henderson, right, leaves court yesterday after David Boyd was convicted of murdering her daughter Nikki Allan, right, in 1992*
PHOTOGRAPH: RAOUL DIXON/NORTH NEWS AND PICTURES



## ‘Nothing mattered more’

# Woman’s long fight to get justice for daughter Nikki

**Mark Brown**
**Kevin Donald**

For Sharon Henderson, bringing the killer of her daughter Nikki Allan to justice has been an all-consuming, personally ruinous three-decade mission. “While there was still breath in my body, I would never have stopped until the man who killed Nikki was found,” she said.

“Nothing mattered more in my life than seeing justice for her. Over these 30 years, I have been through hell. I’ve fought against problems with alcohol and I’ve been sectioned in a psychiatric hospital. But I knew I’d get him, one way or another, however long it took … I’d see him locked up.”

The Nikki Allan story is one of unimaginable human cruelty, devastated lives and police failings - but also one of justice, albeit justice that took 31 years to achieve.

The cruelty is difficult to grasp. Newcastle crown court heard how Nikki, a shy and clingy seven-year-old, skipped into the clutches of her killer because he was someone she knew and had no reason not to trust. That man was David Boyd who, for reasons that will never be fully known, battered her head with a brick, rolled up her T-shirt and stabbed her 37 times. He dragged her body down cellar steps to try to hide her.

The ruined lives include that of George Heron, who was hectored by police into making a confession and was later acquitted by a jury.

Henderson said her life had been taken away. “I’ve become estranged from most of my family through this, it’s taken over my life,” she said. “I spent many years drinking to dangerous levels because of this, and since Nikki’s death I’ve been admitted to psychiatric care.

“My three other daughters have grown up knowing a mother who couldn’t get over the death of their sister and who was drinking herself to death. My life has been on hold for 30 years until someone was finally brought to justice.”

Nikki’s family and her killer all lived on the Garths, run-down and now demolished blocks of 1930s maisonettes in Sunderland’s east end, near the docks.

Henderson’s search for Nikki’s killer began with trying to track down any man who lived on the estate whom she regarded as suspicious. To help her memory, she drew out a map of the block and tried to eliminate each in turn.

> *‘I knew I’d get him, one way or another, however long it took’*
>
> **Sharon Henderson**
> *Nikki’s mother*

Eventually, only one person was left, she said: David Boyd. At the time, he was using the surname Smith and also Bell, so no one knew his true identity.

Henderson said Boyd, then in his mid-20s, was a friend of her sister’s partner, but she had never been able to find out anything about his earlier life. “He was a loner. … I don’t remember speaking to him,” she said. “He was there during the police search for Nikki and always hanging around … but after Nikki’s death he left the Garth.”

She went on a mission to track him down. “I made it my business to become friends with his girlfriend and her daughter and I even moved to Ryhope [a former pit village on the outskirts of Sunderland] to be near them. I wanted to be close to them and find out what they knew about who and where he was. I just knew he had something to do with it.”

In 2006, Northumbria police confirmed that a cold case team was reinvestigating Nikki’s murder. One senior officer at the time, talking to the Guardian, denied that they were only doing so because of Henderson’s campaigning.

Henderson sees it differently. “I was so badly let down by the police, they had so many chances to catch Boyd years and years ago. Instead I have spent 30 years investigating Nikki’s death myself and I could have been spared that if the police had done their job properly. I was treated like a drunken mother with mental health problems, I never felt listened to by the police.”

Ultimately, it was diligent police work that resulted in Boyd’s arrest in 2018, and now, 31 years after the crime, his conviction for murder.

Advances in forensic science and DNA testing have proved to be the key, with Boyd’s DNA matching microscopic samples found on the waistband of Nikki’s shorts and under the armpits of her T-shirt.

George Heron was 24 and had recently moved to the Garths with his sister. At first he denied knowing Nikki but changed his story when witnesses said they knew each other. After three days of police questioning, Heron confessed to killing Nikki. Before then he had denied it 120 times.

The case against Heron unravelled quickly when the judge ruled that six of 12 police interview tapes were inadmissible because officers had used “oppressive methods” to obtain the confession.

After a trial lasting six weeks, the jury acquitted Heron. He moved to the south of England under an assumed name. When a tabloid tracked him down he said: “There were times I wondered if I had killed Nikki. So many people said I had that I started to doubt myself.”

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**Lisbon is best-value European destination**
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**Robot v human**
**What AI revolution could mean for work**
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# National



◀ *Justin Welby prepares to place the St Edward's crown on King Charles's head during the coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey*
PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK

## Godspeed: Welby says he tried three times to pay fine for driving too fast

**Tobi Thomas**

The archbishop of Canterbury has claimed he repeatedly tried to resolve a speeding ticket with the Metropolitan police but was denied three times, before being handed three points on his licence and ordered to pay £510.

Justin Welby was prosecuted at a private hearing on Wednesday after being caught in his Volkswagen Golf doing 25mph in a 20mph zone along the Albert Embankment in central London on 2 October last year.

The comments yesterday top a turbulent seven days after Welby presided over the King Charles's coronation last weekend. The conviction and punishment at Lavender Hill magistrates court occurred on the same day as his intervention in the House of Lords against Rishi Sunak's illegal migration bill.

Welby, 67, admitted the offence online and was ordered to pay a fine of £300, a £120 victim surcharge and £90 in costs, a court spokesperson said. The prosecution was dealt with through written evidence in a private hearing, known as a single justice procedure.

A Lambeth Palace spokesperson later said the archbishop had no idea his case had reached the courts. They said Welby had kept proof that he had tried to pay the fine three times before it reached the courts but was stonewalled owing to administrative errors.

The spokesperson said: "Yes, the archbishop knows about it but hadn't been notified that it had gone to court. He has tried to resolve this and pay the fine three times.

"He has all the paperwork to prove that he has tried to pay. Admin errors seem to be causing problems."

Court papers seen by the Evening Standard show that the Met wrote to Welby after he triggered a speed camera while driving alongside the River Thames, and he admitted being behind the wheel.

The notice of intended prosecution from the police was addressed to "Arch Justin Welby", giving his home address as Lambeth Palace.

"On 02-10-2022 at 11.05am at A3036 Albert Embankment a motor vehicle activated a speed camera," a police worker, Andrew Chapman, said in a statement to the court. "The speed recorded by means of Red-Speed SpeedCurb was 25mph."

It has been a dramatic week for the Church of England's most senior bishop. Last Saturday, he crowned King Charles at Westminster Abbey in a ceremony watched by 20 million Britons and many more worldwide.

On Wednesday, he clashed with ministers after saying the government's flagship illegal migration bill was "morally unacceptable" and would "damage the UK's interests and reputation at home and abroad".

**25mph**
*Speed at which the archbishop of Canterbury was clocked while driving his car in a 20mph zone*

### After the anointing, the points
**How the archbishop crowned his week**

**It has been a momentous week for Justin Welby, the 105th archbishop of Canterbury.**

**Last Saturday, he was on the global stage as he crowned King Charles III, anointing the sovereign with holy oil and issuing a resounding "God save the King!" before 2,000 people in Westminster Abbey and 20 million Britons watching on television.**

**On Wednesday, he leveraged his status as England's most senior cleric and the leader of the established church to castigate the government over its "morally unacceptable" migration bill. His comments made headlines and were met with predictably furious indignation from Conservative MPs and the Daily Mail.**

**But, as they say, from the sublime to the ridiculous. Yesterday, it emerged that Welby had been fined £510 with three points slapped on his licence for driving at 25mph in a 20mph zone. The archbishop was at the wheel of his VW Golf returning to his office at Lambeth Palace at the time.**

**That the case reached Lavender Hill magistrates court at all was the result of "admin errors", the archbishop's spokesperson said.**

**For Welby, the king's coronation was a triumphant climax to mark his 10 years at the helm of the global Anglican church, an anniversary he passed in February. Welby said last year – before he knew he would soon be officiating at the queen's funeral and the king's coronation – that he planned to stay in the role until he reaches the age of 70 in 2026. Now that those two huge ceremonial events have secured his place in history, he may well conclude that another three years of interminable wrangling with church traditionalists over sexuality and reforming internal disciplinary processes have little appeal.**

**On the other hand, Welby may wish to increasingly speak truth to power. His intervention in the House of Lords this week was not the first time he has been accused of overstepping the mark on issues of social justice.**

**Yet the job is relentless. As well as the highly visible formal occasions, there are gruelling foreign trips, endless meetings and a huge bureaucratic institution to run. No wonder he carves out an hour early every morning for solitary prayer. Harriet Sherwood**



Tony Blair on 2 May 1997 after winning a landslide 179-seat majority over John Major's Conservatives

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN/ THE GUARDIAN

# Labour's reforms will go 'further and deeper' than Blair, says Starmer

**Continued** *from page 1*

defended these shifts by saying his proposals have been adapted given unprecedented global events.

He will say this zeal for reform is born from the fact that working people "no longer have faith in an unreformed state".

"We need to accept that nobody is going to unite behind the traditional Westminster way of doing things. Seriously, walk round any working-class community and you will be hit over the head by this," he will say, describing it as a "new partnership between politics and working people: a new Labour project for our times".

The party is considering introducing a so-called "right to switch off" for workers if it wins power after the next general election.

The proposal, which would see employers restricted from contacting workers by phone or email outside working hours, could be similar to legislation already in place in France that seeks to give staff the right to disconnect from devices when not working, with the Financial Times reporting that the policy giving staff a right to disconnect will likely be in the party's general election manifesto.

Starmer is making the intervention after local election results that showed Labour gaining 500 seats at the expense of the Conservatives, becoming the largest party in local government. However, there was a strong showing for the Liberal Democrats too, fuelling talk of a possible hung parliament and speculation about coalitions.

Shabana Mahmood, Labour's election chief, insisted the party was on course for an absolute majority at the next general election based on last week's local voting across England, with Labour particularly confident about gaining seats in Scotland. Starmer's flagship speech comes at a point when Labour is under pressure to set out more big policies, but sources said more details of the party's offering to the electorate would be set out in the coming months and at its autumn conference.

Before then, there is the national policy forum process in July that will begin to shape the priorities for the next Labour government.

In a briefing sent out to Labour members this week, 86 pages of proposals for debate at the forum included measures such as day one rights for workers, billions of pounds of green investment, reform of childcare and a huge expansion of NHS staffing, as well as votes at 16.

Starmer is yet to set out how his proposed reforms to the state would take shape, but he told the Observer earlier this month that he would be "bolder" than the last Labour government on overhauling public services.

He also set out plans to accelerate housebuilding and get more young people on to the property ladder.

In his speech, Starmer will also launch a new attack on the Conservatives for being "unconservative" and failing to understand people's need for "stability, for order, security".

"We must understand there are precious things - in our way of life, in our environment, in our communities - that it is our responsibility to protect and preserve and to pass on to future generations," he will say. "And if that's sounds conservative, then let me tell you: I don't care. Somebody has got to stand up for the things that make this country great and it isn't going to be the Tories."

Starmer will also say that Rishi Sunak's Conservative party does not stand up for "our rivers and seas, not our NHS or BBC, not our families, not our nation".

The Conservative party chairman, Greg Hands, said: "Starmer has backtracked on every pledge he has ever made and he is now cynically trying to rebrand his own flip-flops as 'reform'."

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*Council seats gained by Labour. The party's election chief insists it is on course to form a government*




# 'Everything's in place' National campaign coordinator on Labour's election hopes

**Peter Walker**
*Deputy political editor*

For all that some pundits have tried to present Labour's local elections as middling, Shabana Mahmood is having none of it. Asked how she would have viewed such results for 2023 when she became national campaign coordinator two years earlier, the response is adamant.

"I'd have bitten your arm off," the Birmingham Ladywood MP says. "I'd have done a sort of, 'Please God, inshallah, let that be true.'

"I never doubted we could make progress. But from where we were in 2019, if you had said to me, this is where we'd be now, in 2023, I'd have thought you were insane."

The role, which Mahmood took over from Angela Rayner in May 2021, is not the most visible but is particularly vital for a party which, she concedes, was "completely outplayed" by Boris Johnson's Conservatives in 2019.



Shabana Mahmood, the MP for Birmingham Ladywood, became Labour's national campaign coordinator in 2021

Working closely with Morgan McSweeney, Labour's campaign director, Mahmood has helped oversee a shift towards data and the most effective use of resources, as against an approach in 2019 viewed as sometimes chaotic and unfocused.

Mahmood says last week's gains of 500-plus seats and 71 councils was a direct vindication of this new approach, not least as her team piloted several strategies planned for the general election.

"We had eight local authorities that were too close to call, based on our own data, and we did shift resources and activists in the very last phase of the campaign. And of those, we won six, we pushed one into no overall control and with Darlington, we fell one seat short of a majority. I can look at that and say, we delivered those results

▼ *Keir Starmer visiting Chatham in Kent to mark the party taking control of Medway council for the first time* PHOTOGRAPH: LABOUR PARTY




based on the data operation team at HQ."

For all that she argues the result places Labour on course for a Commons majority, Mahmood happily admits that when Keir Starmer initially checked the preparations for a possible snap election, the answer was not entirely reassuring.

"When he first asked the question – this is quite a few months ago – I was a bit like, 'It's just a little Excel spreadsheet with a few headings on it,'" she says. "I used to describe that as our 'break glass in case of emergency plan': messy, but it would get the job done. But I'm very happy to say we've got everything in place."

As part of the pre-election push, Mahmood's team also sets Labour MPs' minimum thresholds for the campaigning they undertake, which is then noted and analysed.

"I know exactly who didn't meet their target, let's just put it that way," she says. "They'll be hearing about it."

Perhaps Mahmood's most vital task ahead of the election is to help present Starmer as a likely prime minister to a voting public who can seem uninterested not just in the Labour leader but in politics more widely.

"It's a slightly wider question about politics being an answer and not the problem, and that's a hurdle we all have to cross," she says. "But if we can get a hearing on that, everything about Keir's track record and his natural disposition comes through as a problem fixer. And I think that's a key asset for us because it's exactly what the country needs. It almost feels like the Tory strategy, to imply that there's nothing anybody can do about anything, that it's all about external factors."

She is understandably dismissive of complaints that Starmer has yet to fully move on from presenting broader aspirations to outlining specific policies, saying the party had "very solid retail offers" on crime and the NHS last week.

Equally, she argues, Labour has to stress that some issues are structural and cannot be fixed immediately: "I think that gets us a bit more of a hearing because, firstly it's a true, and also people appreciate the acknowledgment of that … We've definitely had a pretty stressful and divisive phase, but if we can get past that sense of people having the hope beaten out of them, lots of voters are in play for both political parties. I think is actually better for our democracy."

## EU legislation
# Repeal policy irresponsible, say lawyers

**Lisa O'Carroll**
*Brexit correspondent*

The Conservatives' decision to water down proposed legislation to remove 4,000 EU laws from the statute books still leaves a "reckless" and "irresponsible" project, leading barristers say.

The business secretary, Kemi Badenoch, has been accused of "a massive climbdown" but lawyers say the retention of sweeping "undemocratic" ministerial powers and the removal of the "interpretive effect" of EU law will blow up decades of legal precedent set by courts in Britain.

"The government's change of approach reducing the number of laws is catching the headlines," said Eleonor Duhs, a partner at Bates Wells who worked on retaining EU law in the Brexit department. "It is welcome, but there is still a precipice for rights, liabilities and powers. It was a reckless piece of legislation from the start and it is still a reckless piece of legislation," she added.

Duhs worked with Dominic Raab to retain EU law when Brexit happened. "We did that to provide certainty," she said. "Now all of a sudden they are throwing that out the window and fundamental rights are going to be deleted by this law." At stake is the concept of "interpretive effect", something the government refers to as the "supremacy of EU law".

The government announced it would reduce the number of laws to be removed from the statute books but also said it would scrap the rule that sets out how laws are interpreted, in effect voiding precedents set by courts and tribunals over 47 years. "You might know the laws that remain on the statute books but you won't know how to interpret them," said George Peretz KC. He said it would have a wide impact on consumers, commercial interests and environmental protections.


▲ *The Marlborough Downs. Experts say commerical obligations to protect farmland will be at risk* PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN TURP/MOMENT RF

If Badenoch's version of the retained EU law bill made it to the statute books, employees would no longer be guaranteed their right not to be discriminated against on grounds of gender or race, for example, he said. An employer might simply say "'sorry, we don't think that is the way that law should be interpreted, because no lawyer will be able to say they know how the law is interpreted'. You might hire a lawyer but they will just come back with a very expensive and elegant 'we don't know how this interpreted either,'" Peretz added. It would mean "the clock starts again" in courts.

> *'It was reckless from the start and it is still reckless legislation'*
>
> **Eleonor Duhs**
> *Brexit legal expert*

With certainty bypassed, commercial interests could have a free-for-all, reneging on obligations to protect farmland, wildlife and freedom of information rules, experts said.

Airlines, for instance, could decide to renege on the guarantee of compensation for delayed or cancelled flights. They could argue the disruption was outside their control and therefore covered by force majeure rules, currently restricted to exceptional events such as terrorism.

"They might argue that staff illness or industrial action is outside their control and they no longer have to pay the compensation," he said. "If rights are as uncertain as the weather this is also really bad for business, because what business likes is certainty."

## Plymouth
# Lives 'put at risk' by delays to gun reform

**Rajeev Syal**
**Steven Morris**

The families of people killed in a mass shooting in Plymouth have accused the Home Office of putting lives at risk after failing to respond to a coroner's inquiry calling for gun reform.

The home secretary, Suella Braverman, the policing minister, Chris Philp, and chief constables were given until 3 May to respond to a detailed examination of gun laws by the Plymouth senior coroner, Ian Arrow, who had ruled five people were unlawfully killed by Jake Davison.

Arrow warned there was "a risk that future deaths could occur unless action is taken" and said he was concerned that the Firearms Act of 1968 "requires root and branch reform".

In February, Arrow conducted the inquest into the unlawful deaths of Davison's mother Maxine, Lee Martyn, Sophie Martyn, Stephen Washington and Kate Shepherd.

No official response from Home Office ministers was received by the coroner by 3 May. It is understood that the department applied for an extension to the deadline.

Patrick Maguire, a partner at law firm HCC, who represents Rebecca Martyn, the mother of Sophie and wife of Lee, the Washington family and the Shepherd family, said delays in implementing Arrow's critical recommendations "puts lives at risk".

"We are deeply disappointed that the Home Office has not responded within the timescale presented. Our priority is to ensure everything is done to prevent what happened to our loved ones happening to anyone else," he said.

Davison, 22, used a legally owned shotgun to kill his mother before killing three-year-old Sophie, her father, Lee, 43, Stephen, 59, and Kate, 66, in August 2021 in the Keyham area of Plymouth. He then turned the gun on himself as he was confronted by an unarmed police officer.


▲ *Tributes in Plymouth to the five shooting victims of Jake Davison*

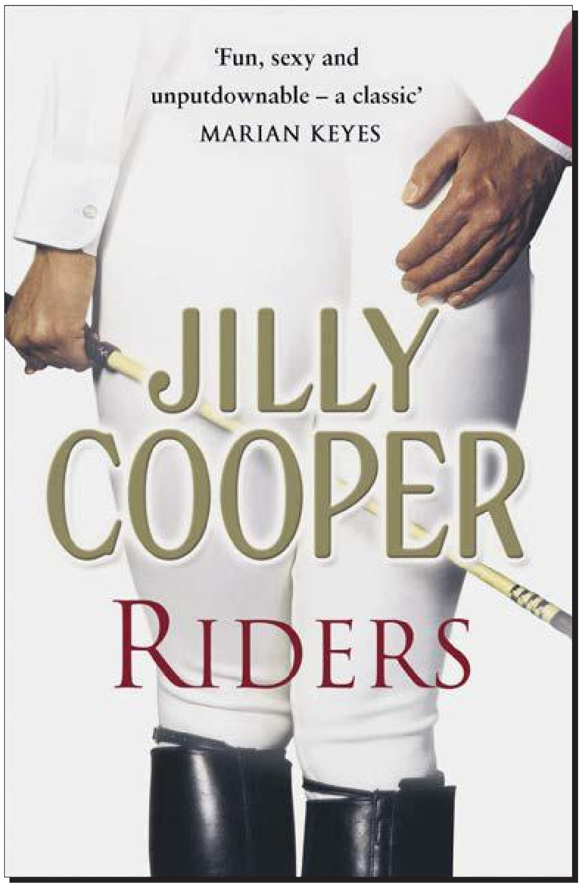
A jury concluded "catastrophic" failures by Devon and Cornwall police meant Davison was wrongly allowed to own a pump-action shotgun.

In February, Arrow wrote to the home secretary and all 43 police forces in England and Wales, highlighting the concerns he had raised and asking for a response within 56 days. He suggested that if England and Wales had the same stricter firearms regulations as Northern Ireland, the deaths may have been avoided.

Gill Marshall-Andrews, the chair of the Gun Control Network, said: "The 56 days are up and there has been no word from the government about how they will respond to the recommendations. The Home Office knows what should be done. Shooters have had far too much sway over firearms policy for far too long. Public safety should be prioritised now."

A Home Office spokesperson said: "The UK has some of the strictest gun controls in the world, which we keep under constant review to preserve public safety. We are carefully considering the findings and expect to respond shortly."


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▲ *Emily in Paris, above, and the novel Riders which, according to the Spectator, are favourites of the PM*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: CAROLE BETHUEL/NETFLIX

# Titillating novels – and Emily in Paris

## Sunak reveals more of his guilty pleasures

**Aletha Adu**

It seems Rishi Sunak is still embarking on his awkward journey of growth from being "out of touch" to integrating with the real world, as more of his apparent guilty pleasures have emerged.

In his spare time, the sliders-wearing, McDonald's-loving polished tech-bro apparently enjoys reading racy novels by the bestselling author Jilly Cooper. The former high-flying banker ranks Riders, as one of his all-time favourite novels, according to the Spectator magazine.

The 1985 novel was set in the world of showjumping and centres on the personal and professional life of the devastatingly good-looking but dastardly Rupert Campbell-Black and his rival Jake Lovell. In Cooper's words, the book was based on four "very, very grand, gorgeous men who I met and thought: 'Gosh, I'll put a bit of that in a book.'"

Its saucy cover originally featured a woman in jodhpurs, holding a riding crop, with a guy's hand firmly resting on her bottom. But in 2015 it was controversially redesigned, moving the man's hand a few inches higher up the rider's bottom.

One passage reads: "Fascinated, she watched his long fingers stroking her belly, then sliding into the dark bush …" Another excerpt adds: "Now he was lifting her right leg, holding back the inside of her thigh … it was like an express train going into a tunnel."

The prime minister's deputy spokesman said discussion of this novel "hadn't come up" in any of their conversations .

Sunak, who turned 43 yesterday and celebrated with a carrot cake

> *'Fascinated, she watched his fingers stroking her belly'*
>
> **Excerpt from Riders**
> *Jilly Cooper*

from his team, and dinner with his wife, is also said to enjoy watching the Netflix show Emily in Paris. According to the Spectator his colleagues tease him for his taste in music, as he is apparently a Michael Bublé fan.

The prime minister has previously sworn to owning a hip-hop playlist to help him get psyched-up before speeches. Although he also said he listened to the Global station Heart 00s on the way into HQ.

In his first attempt to become prime minister, last summer Sunak told ITV's This Morning programme he enjoyed McDonald's breakfast wraps – an item that had actually disappeared from the chain's menu almost two-and-a-half years before he made the claim. A source from Sunak's campaign said he had eaten the wraps with his children when they were on the menu: "I think given he's barely seen his kids in the last two-and-a-half years, it's likely he hasn't been to McDonald's in that time."

Sunak has been mocked for his attempts to "fit in" with youth culture, especially when pictures of him preparing for the budget were released and he was pictured wearing white socks and a pair of £95 sliders from the Italian streetwear brand Palm Angels.

But as stylist Gary Armstrong noted, at the time the pictures were released in October 2021, the real world of fashion had "already moved on slightly from straightforward sliders".

Cooper once said she was inspired to finish the novel Riders after spending a night in a Kama Sutra room with her husband.

# Conservatives Grassroots group denies it's 'Johnson revivalist'

**Peter Walker**
**Pippa Crerar**

It is the inaugural conference of a group promising to restore grassroots control to the Conservatives and ensure the party's MPs can never again impose their own leader. There is, however, one pivotal figure who will be notable by his absence: Boris Johnson.

The Conservative Democratic Organisation (CDO), gathering in Bournemouth today, insists it is not a Johnson-revivalist group, and its purpose is to make the party more accountable to the rank and file.

For all that, it is notable that almost every speaker lined up – among them Priti Patel, Jacob Rees-Mogg and Nadine Dorries – are noted Johnson supporters. The CDO itself emerged from anger at the way the former prime minister was removed by Tory MPs.

Johnson is reported to have signed bottles of wine for a charity auction, but he will not attend, despite the organisers' tantalising promise of "very special guests".

Some allies suggest he still harbours hope of a comeback. This week he was spotted in conversation with his successor, Liz Truss, at 5 Hertford Street, an exclusive Mayfair private members club. However, he appears very busy with life well beyond Westminster, earning millions on the international speaking circuit and focusing on his growing family, who moved this week into their new £4m nine-bedroom, Grade II-listed home with a moat in Oxfordshire, according to friends.

David Campbell Bannerman, the former MEP who launched the CDO in December with Peter Cruddas, the banker and Tory peer, says the conference will finalise a list of demands to the party including a grassroots-elected chair.

Many Tory members felt they had been gradually shut out on everything from candidate selections to policy, he said. "What we rail against is the contempt shown for the members. They are good people whose voice should be listened to. A lot of members feel that all they seem to be good for at the moment is leaflets and fundraising. They've got other things they could be doing."

While the CDO remains relatively small and thus far the preserve of a particular cohort of Johnson-sympathising MPs and members, Conservative central office is sufficiently wary that it is sending Paul Holmes, the Eastleigh MP and a party vice-chair, to represent them in Bournemouth.

Senior Tory insiders, already concerned at what they see as a party within a party, were alarmed when it emerged in March that Arron Banks, the former Ukip donor, had held discussions with Cruddas about the CDO's work.

Banks has told friends he was "helping" Johnson with a potential comeback by using his database to "reach out" to local Conservative associations, sources said. Banks was contacted for comment.

While Campbell Bannerman insisted the conference, which will be followed by a dinner and dancing, was not intended to reinstall Johnson, it is very much aimed at highlighting disquiet about how Sunak become prime minister. "I think what a lot of members think – and a lot of the public – is, who is this guy, who elected him? He has shallow roots because he's been anointed, not elected."


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# Harry's phone-hacking evidence 'slim to nonexistent', Mirror Group claims



▲ *The prince is among witnesses due to give evidence to the court in June*

**Jim Waterson**
*Media editor*

Prince Harry has no evidence that he was the victim of phone hacking by Mirror journalists and many stories about his private life were instead leaked by royal press officers, the high court has heard.

The Duke of Sussex alleges that dozens of news stories published in the Daily Mirror, Sunday Mirror and People were obtained through phone hacking or other illegal behaviour. The articles – published between 1995 and 2011 – detail his relationship with his family, his relationship with ex-girlfriend Chelsy Davy, his military service and allegations of drug use.

He alleges that this behaviour was condoned by senior executives such as Piers Morgan.

Mirror Group Newspapers has accepted that on one occasion it employed a private investigator to illegally gather information on Harry. But it insists that most of its stories were obtained legally and the prince has "no basis" to claim his voicemails were hacked by Mirror journalists.

Andrew Green KC, the company's barrister, said that just because other celebrities had their phones hacked by Mirror journalists, it did not mean that Harry was targeted in this manner. He said the evidence offered by the prince was "slim to utterly nonexistent".

Instead, the newspaper publisher suggested that its stories about Harry came from confidential sources, friends of the prince, and royal press officers.

In one instance, Harry claims an article published when Morgan was Daily Mirror editor about the teenage prince catching glandular fever, entitled "Harry's sick with kissing disease", must have been obtained illegally.

The Mirror's lawyers claim that the real source of the story was probably King Charles's former press chief Mark Bolland, who had a strong personal relationship with Morgan "involving regular calls, meals and drinking sessions together". The newspaper group implies that Harry should blame his father's aides for intruding upon his privacy rather than journalists.

The company said that when the Metropolitan police discovered the News of the World reporter Clive Goodman had hacked Prince Harry's phone in 2006, the police would have noticed if Mirror journalists had also been listening to royal voicemails.

Harry is one of four individuals whose phone-hacking claims against the Mirror publisher are being tested in a seven-week trial at the high court. The Mirror is disputing specific allegations of phone hacking, while also arguing that the claimants missed a legal deadline to start their claims.

David Sherborne, the barrister for Harry and the other alleged victims, told the court there had been widespread illegal behaviour at the Mirror's newspapers. He alleged that senior executives, including Morgan, must have known about tactics ranging from phone hacking to landline tapping and the blagging of private financial records. Morgan has denied he ever knowingly published stories based on phone hacking.

The first three weeks of the trial will deal with general issues around alleged illegal behaviour at the three newspapers, while the second half will hear evidence from the four alleged victims. Prince Harry is due to give evidence to the trial over three days at the start of June.

# 'Best ever' Nintendo's latest Zelda game hits the stores



◀ *A screenshot from The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom. It's being called one of the greatest video games* PHOTOGRAPH: NINTENDO

**Keza MacDonald**

If university lecture halls and offices looked a little quiet yesterday, it may have been down to Nintendo. The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom – the latest in Nintendo's long-running series of life-absorbing adventure video games – has launched for the firm's Switch console to a chorus of critical praise.

On review aggregation site Metacritic, it currently has an average score of 97/100, putting it comfortably in video games' top echelon. That makes it a game worth taking a day off work to play – or maybe even a week.

If Mario is gaming's most recognisable face, the medium's equivalent of Mickey Mouse, Zelda is more like Indiana Jones – clever, swashbuckling and much imitated. It is the connoisseur's choice, a game whose puzzles and battles involve your intellect as much as your reflexes. Tears of the Kingdom invites players to explore a fantasy kingdom, Hyrule, as elven hero Link, letting them chart their own path through the world and uncover its many secrets.

It is already being called one of the greatest video games; Trusted Reviews said it was "likely to go down in history as one of the best games ever to grace a Nintendo console", and the games media's longstanding behemoth IGN has called it an "unfathomable follow-up, expanding a world that already felt full beyond expectation and raising the bar ever higher into the clouds".

Critics have said it offers a previously unimagined level of creative freedom, letting players fabricate their own weapons and madcap contraptions, from makeshift planes to flame-throwing shields.

Eiji Aonuma, a producer who has been working on Zelda games since the mid-90s, believes that the series' willingness to trust the player's intellectual curiosity is the key to their appeal.

"A lot of time people tell me that when they play Zelda, there are these wonderful 'I did it!' moments, where they solve a puzzle and think they must surely be the only person in the world who could have cracked it," he says.

"I think if we provided too much guidance about how to do things, they wouldn't feel that way. The feeling of satisfaction comes from exploring and figuring things out on their own – that's the route to joy. In Tears of the Kingdom I believe that this aspect, this feeling, has become even stronger."

The Zelda series' developers at Nintendo are no stranger to breathless critical acclaim. Ever since it debuted nearly 30 years ago on the Nintendo Entertainment System, new entries in this series have often represented a leap forward in the creative and technological possibilities of video games. The Legend of Zelda in 1986 was among the first games that allowed players to explore as they saw fit rather than following a linear series of levels.



▲ *A customer in costume queues to buy the latest game in New York*

## Why are people so excited about The Legend of Zelda?

**Why the excitement?**
**Six years in the making, The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom is a sequel to Breath of the Wild, which launched alongside Nintendo's Switch console in 2017. Released to critical acclaim, its reputation has only grown since then.**

**What's so special about it?**
**Breath of the Wild broke with the conventional approach to game design by throwing players into a vast world with almost no constraints on what they could do to explore it. Every corner, peak and valley was available to explore from beginning, and the handcrafted land of Hyrule was "bursting at the seams" with activities to distract and delight.**

**Has it been a commercial hit?**
**The original game had sold just over 30m copies as of March, making it one of the bestselling games of all time. Nintendo's policy of rarely discounting old games gives it an outsized financial impact: few other six-year-old games still sell in large numbers at £45. With an estimated revenue of more than £1.3bn, the game has brought in more cash than Nintendo's own Super Mario Bros movie, which has grossed £930m globally this year. Alex Hern**

▼ *Mae Muller rehearsing the UK entry, I Wrote a Song, at the Liverpool Arena yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: PETER BYRNE/PA WIRE



# Ukraine aims for repeat victory in stridently political Eurovision final

**Josh Halliday**
*North of England correspondent*

There will be rockets, soldiers, and moustachioed men in their underpants lampooning Vladimir Putin as a "crocodile psychopath" - and that's just the Croatian act.

One of the most stridently political Eurovision grand finals in years takes place in Liverpool tonight against a backdrop of a war in Ukraine that shows little sign of ending.

The Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, has been banned from making a live televised address during the four-hour broadcast as organisers were concerned it risked politicising the contest. There will be little subtlety, however, in the 67th edition of this ritually eccentric event. It will open with a haunting performance by last year's winner, Ukraine's Kalush Orchestra, singing their wartime hit Stefania to a looming backdrop of a pained-looking matriarch.

The spectacle will be beamed live to a global television audience of more than 160 million people from the Liverpool Arena on the banks of the Mersey.



▲ *The Ukrainian entry Tvorchi with a song called Heart of Steel*

The UK is hosting the contest for the first time in 25 years on behalf of Ukraine, with Liverpool cast as "bittersweet caretakers of displaced guests of honour" in Thursday's semi-final.

One of the most political songs is by Croatia's surrealist punk rockers Let 3, about the "crocodile psychopath" Putin and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The band, who appear on stage in soldier outfits and cartoon moustaches before stripping off to their underwear and unveiling huge rockets, have been likened online to "if Super Mario, Sonic the Hedgehog and Boy George had a baby".

Switzerland's performance features falling missiles and the lyrics "I don't wanna be a soldier, soldier. I don't wanna have to play with real blood."

Each act will be introduced with "postcard" videos featuring landmarks in Ukraine and Britain alongside the 35 other competing nations, a nod to this year's slogan "united by music" and a showcase for a country under siege.

There will be tears, too. Tis year's co-host Hannah Waddingham, star of TV show Ted Lasso, appeared emotional during a rendition of You'll Never Walk Alone in rehearsals



◀ *The Finnish act Käärijä is one of the favourites to win this year. Below, Luke Black of Serbia performs during a dress rehearsal*
PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN MEISSNER/AP



yesterday. The 60-year-old song, which has become a Liverpool football club anthem, will be performed by the Netherlands' Duncan Laurence during the voting rounds and there will be live footage of Ukrainians singing along in Kyiv.

Ukraine is aiming to become the first nation since Ireland in 1994 to win in two consecutive years. The electro duo Tvorchi, whose rehearsals at home were interrupted by air raid sirens, will hope to win the solidarity vote with their bass-driven stomper Heart of Steel, which warns of the threat of nuclear Armageddon.

The duo, who walked the Eurovision turquoise carpet this week in blazers engraved with the names and weights of babies who had been born prematurely due to the war, are raising money to buy neonatal incubators for their country.

Jeffrey Kenny, the vocalist, said they would consider auctioning the famous microphone-shaped trophy if they won on Saturday, after Kalush Orchestra sold last year's award to raise $900,000 (£713,000) for the Ukrainian army. "If we win, it's OK - we'll sell the trophy. We'll sell our outfits, it doesn't matter," he said.

The pair never expected to be chosen to represent their country - they had bought train tickets home from Kyiv on the day of the selection. Their home city, Ternopil in western Ukraine, was reportedly shelled by Russian forces this week.

"The results don't really matter in this case," Kenny said. "The number one thing is to win the war because that's the only way we can host."

Anyone who expects Ukraine to coast to victory should think again, however. Sweden is the runaway favourite with a shimmering return for Loreen, who won in 2021.

Finland's Käärijä, who posed for selfies this week with fans outside his own mobile sauna in Liverpool's Albert Dock - is incredibly popular and his Cha Cha Cha is one of this year's biggest earworms, with a performance to match.

The UK's Mae Muller, who was not yet born when the UK last hosted Eurovision, is tipped to finish in the top 10 with I Wrote a Song, which after last year's runner-up spot would be the country's second highest placing since 2009.

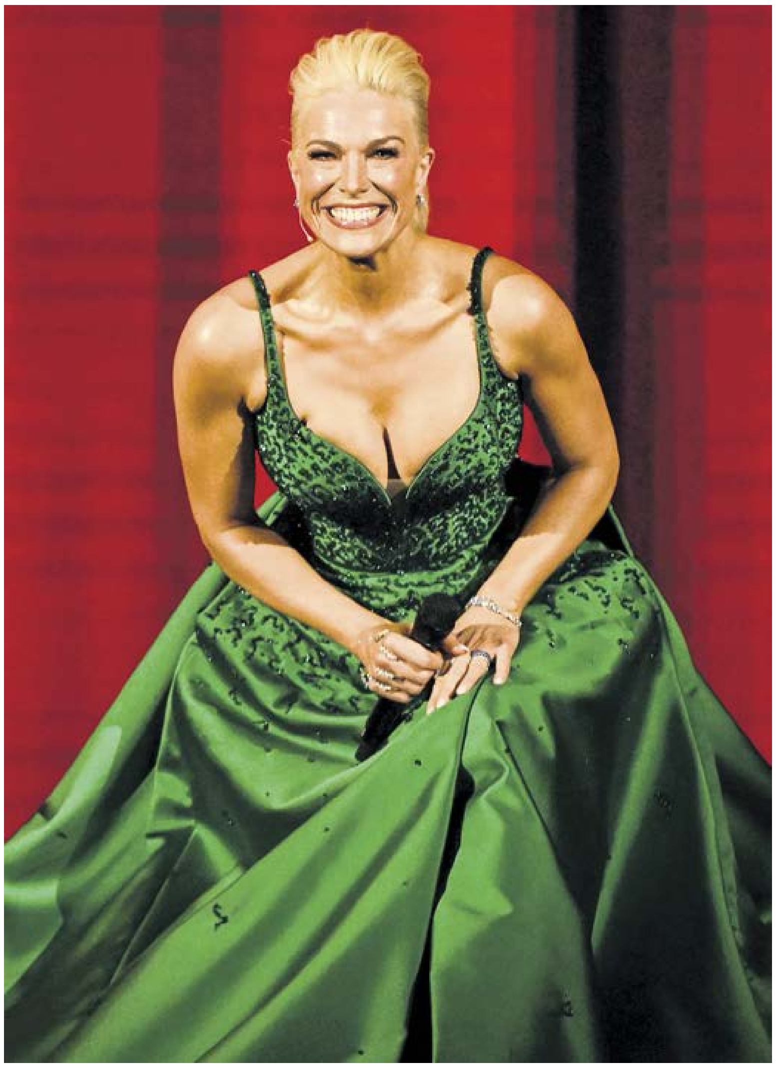
Adrian Bradley, a Eurovision expert, said the standard of performance of this year's contestants was a notch above previous years, helped by a "really impressive" BBC production. It was also one of the most political Eurovisions in years, he said, despite the organisers' attempts to be studiously neutral.

"It's very much: this is what is happening to Ukrainians - the air raid sirens, the song Ordinary World and how that was presented [in the first semi-final], right down to the colours of the Ukrainian flag draped around the whole performance," he said.

Paul Bradley, an avid fan who previously worked for Eurovision, said the BBC and the European Broadcasting Union, which owns the contest, had not shied away from the war despite the rules about the nonpolitical nature of the contest.

"Politics comes into the World Cup, it comes into the Olympic Games, and Eurovision too - but overall it's still a fun show," he said. "I think that's the main thing is that it's joyous."

▼ *Hannah Waddingham hosting last month's Olivier Awards at the Royal Albert Hall in London*
PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF SPICER/GETTY IMAGES



# Hannah Waddingham

## Ted Lasso star scores douze points as competition host

**Josh Halliday**

Forget who lifts the famous Eurovision microphone trophy tonight, the real winner has already been crowned. Hannah Waddingham, the star of Ted Lasso and Sex Education, is better known in the US than the UK - but perhaps not for much longer.

The London-born actor has wowed viewers of this week's Eurovision semi-finals, presenting alongside the singer and Britain's Got Talent judge Alesha Dixon and the Ukrainian singer-songwriter Julia Sanina. Reviewers have gushed over Waddingham's "easy chemistry, smooth patter and willingness to join in the silliness", while her impromptu dance moves, exuberant facial expressions and linguistic skills have spawned thousands of internet memes.

She had the crowd in Liverpool Arena chanting her name after reciting the Eurovision rules in fluent French before adding: "You see, Europe, some of us Brits do bother to learn another language."

The BBC presenter Nina Warhurst told the corporation's Eurovisioncast podcast: "I think we have an overnight national treasure on our hands. Hannah Waddingham is the absolute bomb."

Warhurst said that the co-host "looks like she's having the time of her life" and combines the "sort of Eurovision schmaltz with a humorous side-eye but extraordinary warmth as well".

Waddingham is no stranger to the stage, but many viewers would be forgiven for not being aware of her before this week.

She has been a leading lady in

> **'I think we have an overnight national treasure on our hands'**
>
> **Nina Warhurst**
> *BBC presenter*

the West End and Broadway for more than 20 years but had played mainly bit parts on screen - such as Tonya Dyke in Benidorm and an adult film star in the BBC's Not Going Out - before finding wider fame via Game of Thrones, which she joined in season five, and more recently Ted Lasso and Sex Education.

Waddingham hosted last month's Olivier awards - her presenting debut - to similarly rave reviews. But Eurovision, with more than 160 million viewers worldwide, catapults her to a new level of stardom.

She will fulfil a childhood dream when she hosts the grand final alongside the Eurovision favourite Graham Norton.

The prospect of announcing the winner "literally gives me shivers of excitement", she told the Eurovisioncast. "My 12-year-old self couldn't believe that I would ever be saying [it]."

Paul Jordan, 39, who has attended almost every song contest since 2000, said Waddingham was not a complete unknown but her fame - until now - was a case of "those who know, know".

"This is the first time it's proper mainstream," he said. "There will be about 10 or 12 million people watching her [in the UK] and I think people are going to be really endeared."

Jordan, who was formerly a communications official for Eurovision, said Waddingham "outshines every other person on that stage" and had three characteristics that made a perfect co-host: heart, warmth and fun.

He added: "She's endearing herself to new audiences and I really hope we get to see more of her because she's funny, she's a good presenter, she can sing, she can act. There's not really anything she can't do.

"If her career goes to bigger and bigger things because of this, it will be thoroughly deserved, and it was an inspired choice to choose her."



▶ *Hannah Waddingham is best known for playing the football club owner Rebecca Welton in Ted Lasso*
PHOTOGRAPH: COLIN HUTTON/APPLE



▲ *The Ukrainian president's request to speak at the final was refused*

# Starmer and Sunak criticise decision of organisers to snub Zelenskiy

**Joe Middleton**

Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer have voiced their disapproval of a decision to prevent Volodymyr Zelenskiy from being able to address this year's Eurovision.

The prime minister and the Labour leader were united in criticising the decision to block the Ukrainian president's request to speak at tonight's grand final. They were joined in their opposition by the former prime minister Boris Johnson.

Zelenskiy intended to make an unannounced video appearance and was expected to implore the international audience to continue backing his country against Russia's unprovoked invasion.

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU), which produces the event, said Zelenskiy had "laudable" intentions, but rejected the request over fears it could politicise the event.

Yesterday, the prime minister's official spokesperson said: "The prime minister believes it would be fitting for President Zelenskiy to address the event and we're disappointed by the decision from the European Broadcasting Union.

"The values and freedoms that President Zelenskiy and the people of Ukraine are fighting for are not political, they're fundamental, and Eurovision themselves recognised that last year when they rightly suspended Russia's participation from the competition."

Starmer also waded into the row and agreed with Sunak that Zelenskiy should be allowed to speak at the contest.

In a statement, the Labour leader said: "It's vital that we all continue to keep the plight of the Ukrainian people front of mind as they stand up to Russian aggression on behalf of us all.

"Eurovision is an expression of international unity and freedom, and President Zelenskiy should be able to address it as a great defender of both."

The Liverpool city region mayor, Steve Rotheram, said he would be speaking with both the Ukrainian ambassador and the mayor of Lviv, who are both in Liverpool for the final, "to discuss what we can do to provide a platform" for Zelenskiy.

*Additional reporting* **PA Media**

# Police forced to apologise after royal fan arrested at coronation and detained for 13 hours

**Tobi Thomas**



▼ *Alice Chambers was arrested as she was waiting to see the king on his way to Westminster Abbey*
PHOTOGRAPH: SKY NEWS

Police have been forced to apologise to a royal fan after arresting and detaining her for 13 hours for standing near a group of Just Stop Oil protesters at King Charles's coronation.

Alice Chambers, an Australian architect based in London, was waiting on the Mall in central London to see the king pass by on his way to Westminster Abbey when she was handcuffed by police officers.

In scenes filmed by Sky News, Chambers was told she was being arrested on suspicion of "potential to cause a breach of peace". According to Chambers, she did not know who the protesters were at the time.

Chambers told Sky News: "There was a big commotion as several police officers swooped in and started arresting Just Stop Oil protesters before they could begin protesting. Before I could get up, two police officers came over and grabbed me, before taking me away in handcuffs. When I was arrested I repeatedly tried to explain to the police I had no affiliation with the protesters. I provided my personal details, but was still detained for 13 hours."

She said she was released with no further action only after being interviewed, when police realised she was just a bystander. She said officers then apologised to her for the misunderstanding.

She has called for an investigation into police behaviour on the day of the coronation, adding: "It's just been so shocking, and very emotional. It's not something you ever expect, to find yourself in a jail cell for a period of time."

A Scotland Yard spokesperson said: "We are aware a woman was arrested in relation to a protest on 6 May. The arresting officer was from Lincolnshire police and the complaint has therefore been passed to the relevant force to investigate."

# Sats exams are 'designed to be challenging', DfE tells tests' critics

**Joe Middleton**

Ministers have said that tests for year 6 pupils in England are "designed to be challenging" after concerns from a headteachers' union that this week's Sats exams had left pupils "in tears".

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) said some staff struggled to understand the questions and it planned to raise concerns about Wednesday's reading exam for 10- and 11-year-olds with the schools regulator, Ofqual.

The difficulty of the paper prompted a flurry of complaints online from parents and teachers.

Yesterday, the Department for Education defended the difficulty of the tests. A DfE spokesperson said: "Key stage 2 assessments are key in identifying pupils' strengths and where they may have fallen behind as they head to secondary school.

"The tests are designed to be challenging in order to measure attainment across the ability range, including stretching the most able children. Schools should always encourage pupils to do their best, but preparing for primary assessments should not be at the expense of children's wellbeing."

Sats are used to measure English and maths skills in year 2 and year 6, and consist of six 45-minute papers.

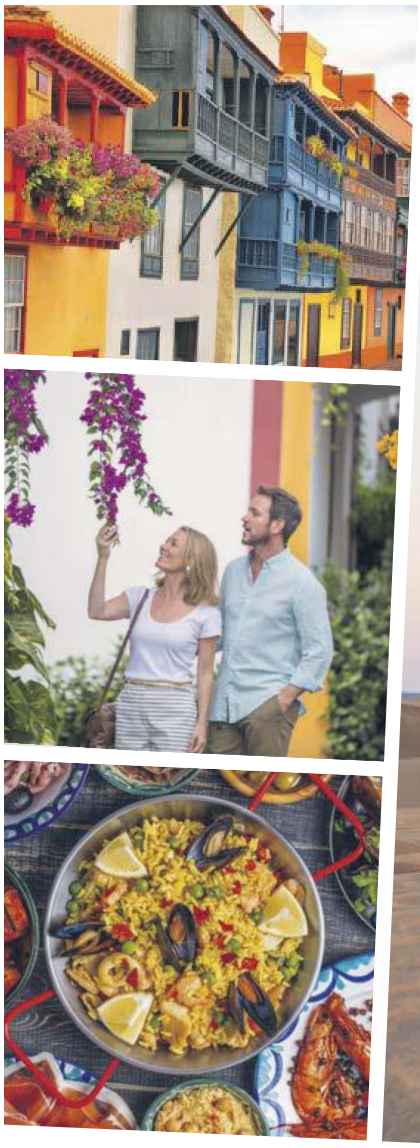
Kerry Forrester, a headteacher at a Cheshire primary school, has written to her local MP expressing concern about the "negative impact" of the exams on the "mental health and wellbeing" of her pupils.

In a letter she shared on Twitter, Forrester said this year has seen "the most negative impact on our children that we have ever experienced".

"Tears flowed from our most capable readers and stress levels rose amongst all others," she said, adding that "this was the most challenging reading test I have seen in my 29 years as a teacher".

*PA Media contributed to this report*

> *'This was the most challenging reading test I have seen'*
>
> **Kerry Forrester**
> *Cheshire headteacher*






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# Battle of the gas giants: Saturn regains lead from Jupiter as solar system's planet with most moons

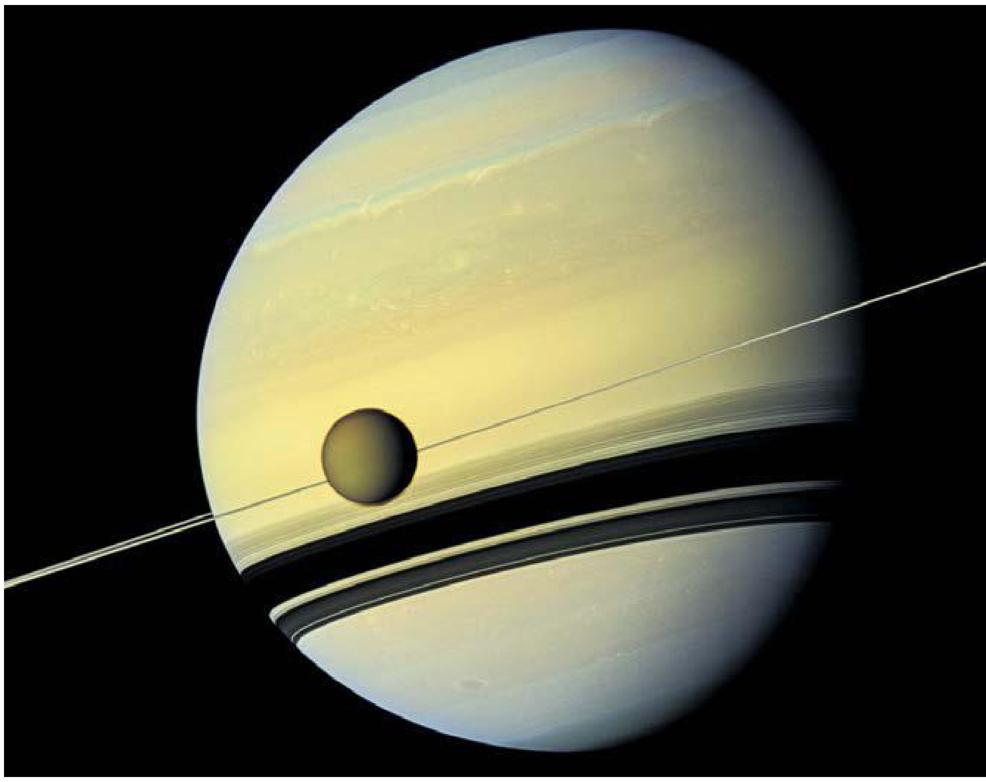
**Hannah Devlin**
**Nicola Davis**

Saturn has regained its crown for the planet with the most moons in the solar system, just months after being overtaken by its fellow gas giant, Jupiter.

The leapfrog comes after the discovery of 62 new moons of Saturn, bringing its official total to 145. Jupiter, which added 12 moons to its tally in February, has 95 moons that have been formally designated by the International Astronomical Union.

"Saturn not only has nearly doubled its number of moons, it now has more moons than all the rest of the planets in the solar system combined," said Prof Brett Gladman, an astronomer at the University of British Columbia who was involved in the observations.

The new moons, which have been assigned strings of numbers and letters for now, will eventually be given names based on Gallic, Norse and Canadian Inuit gods, in keeping with convention for Saturn's moons.



◀ *Titan, the largest moon of Saturn. Many of the planet's satellites will have been caused by earlier moons crashing into each other* PHOTOGRAPH: NASA/AFP/GETTY

**62**
*The number of moons that researchers have just discovered orbiting Saturn, bringing its total to 145. Jupiter has 95*

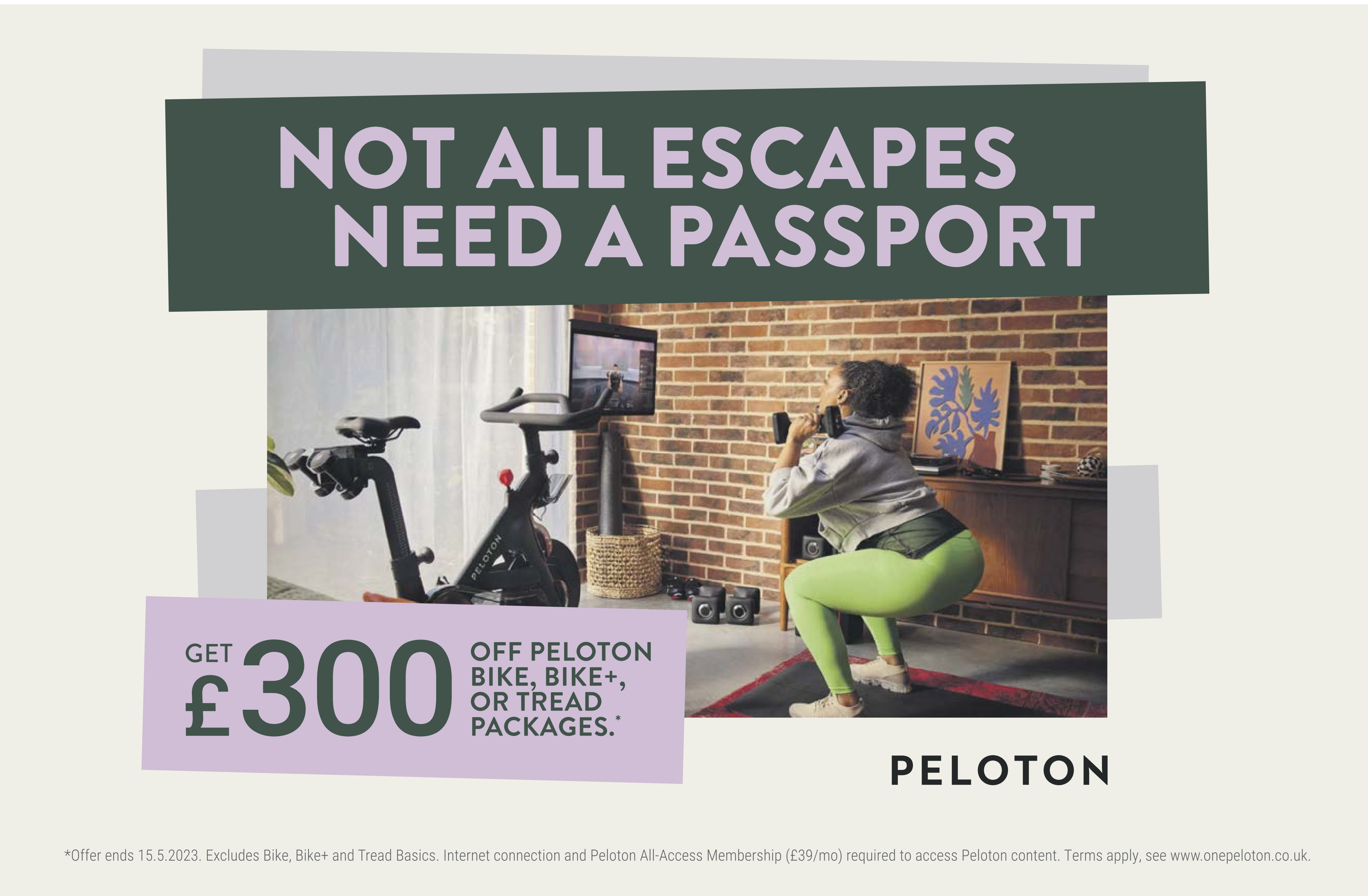
Many of the new objects are likely to be remnants of a relatively recent moon-moon collision that resulted in a larger moon fracturing and "spreading its children" in orbit.

While it is possible that Jupiter may, in future, temporarily inch ahead, the latest findings appear to cement the case that Saturn has more moons. Since Jupiter is closer, astronomers can spot much smaller moons.

"At a fixed size there are three times more Saturn satellites than Jupiter satellites," said Gladman. "They're not all known yet, but we already know the final answer."

In recent decades, the number of confirmed moons has steadily increased as telescopes and analysis methods have stepped up in sensitivity. The latest study used a technique called "shift and stack" to discover smaller satellites. It involves shifting sequential images at the rate that the moon is moving across the sky, making the moon appear brighter when all the data is combined.

Dr Edward Ashton, who led the project at the University of British Columbia and now works at Taiwan's Academia Sinica Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics, compared the challenge of connecting the various appearances of the moons in the data to a child's dot-to-dot drawing. "But with about 100 different games on the same page and you don't know which dot belongs to which puzzle," he said.



*Offer ends 15.5.2023. Excludes Bike, Bike+ and Tread Basics. Internet connection and Peloton All-Access Membership (£39/mo) required to access Peloton content. Terms apply, see www.onepeloton.co.uk.



**Standing guard** A mother swan spreads her wings as she stands over her nest full of cygnets on the Grand Union Canal in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, yesterday.

PHOTOGRAPH: JEREMY SELWYN

# Cancer hospital loses top rating after staff raise bullying concerns

**Denis Campbell**
*Health policy editor*

The NHS's biggest cancer hospital was downgraded in ratings by the care watchdog yesterday after staff raised concerns about bullying.

The Care Quality Commission warned the Christie hospital in Manchester that it required improvement in its leadership and the safety of the care it provided.

The regulator removed the "outstanding" rating that the Christie NHS foundation trust has had for its overall performance since 2016 and demoted it to a "good" rating.

The Christie is the biggest cancer hospital in Europe and is renowned for the quality of its specialist care.

In recent years NHS England and several reviews have voiced unease over concerns raised by staff, including by whistleblowers, about what one inquiry described as "bullying, harassment and racial prejudice … along with lack of respect at work" - and also how the trust handled them.

An external review by NHS England in 2020 found current and former Christie staff had reported "instances of inappropriate behaviours and unfair treatment … feeling intimidated … the existence of cliques [and] the abuse of positional power".

In a report published yesterday the CQC said: "Staff told us that some senior leaders were not always visible or approachable."

It also found that "very senior executives were heavily invested in the promotion and protection of the trust's reputation. This impacted negatively on some staff; staff did not always feel supported and valued."

The report added: "A minority of staff expressed reservations about raising concerns and others did not always feel listened to."

In addition "equality, diversity and inclusion had not been effectively prioritised within the trust in the previous three years".

But CQC inspectors highlighted the "strong, visible clinical leadership" displayed by Janelle Yorke, the Christie's chief nurse, and Dr Neil Bayman, its medical director, and the chief operating officer Bernie Delahoyde's "clear strategic leadership".

However, they received "variable feedback" about other senior leaders.

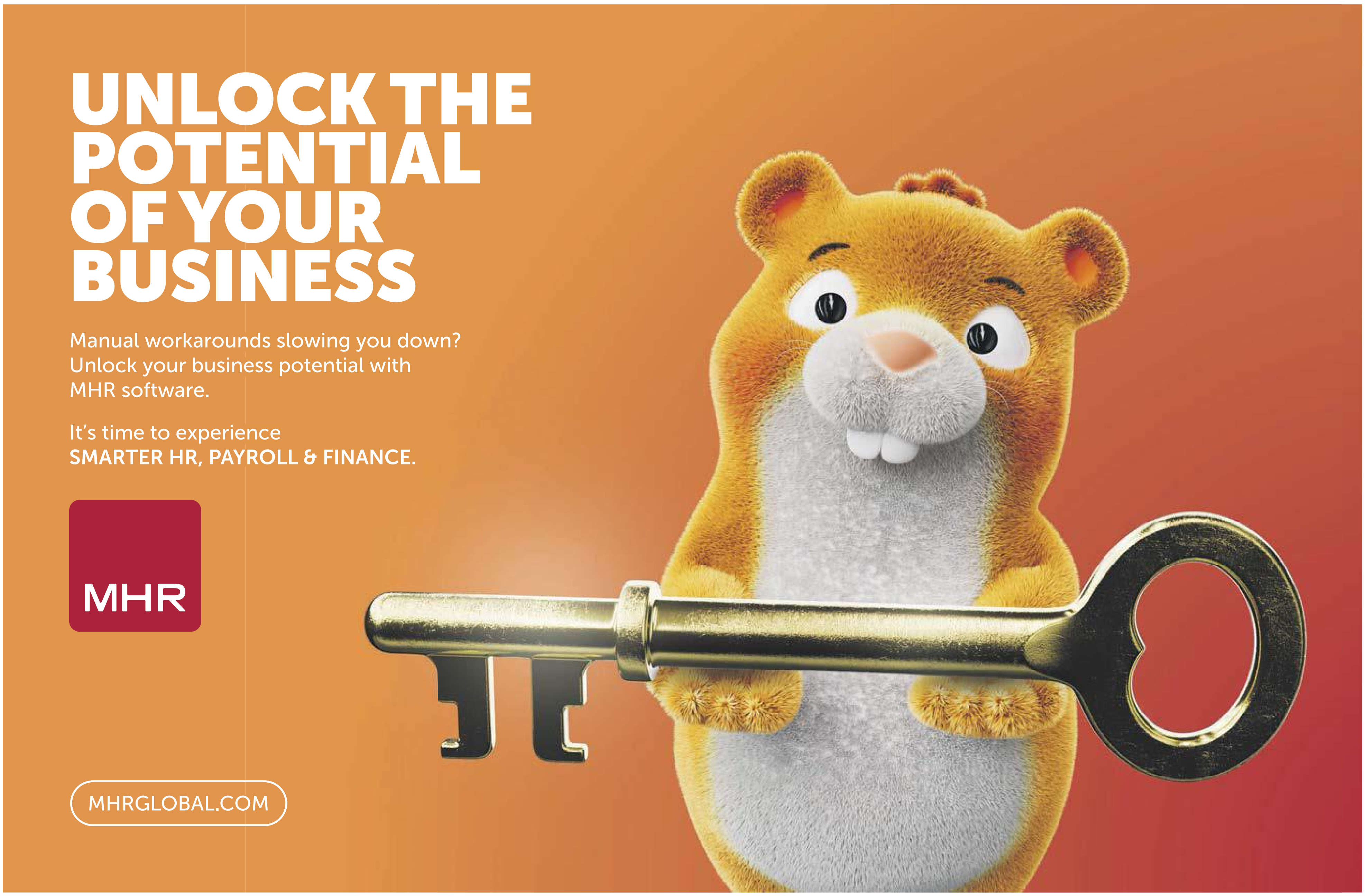
Ann Ford, the CQC's director of operations in the north, said: "Staff didn't always feel supported and valued, with some telling us they felt they couldn't raise concerns or weren't listened to when they did."

While the Christie had made improvements to its culture, "more work needs to be done ", she added.

The CQC also commended several areas of "outstanding practice". It highlighted that the Christie in 2018 became Britain's first centre to provide high-energy proton beam therapy to treat complex cancers.

The Manchester Academic Health Science Centre recently awarded three members of Christie staff honorary clinical chairs in recognition of their contribution to cancer services, research and education.

Roger Spencer, the trust's chief executive since 2013, said: "We are working hard to make the improvements that have been highlighted by the CQC, ensuring all our staff feel supported and valued, and I thank them all for continuing to put patients at the centre of everything we do."





◀ Lennox's team has published a series of case reports in which patients with psychosis benefited from immunotherapy
PHOTOGRAPH: LINDA NYLIND/ THE GUARDIAN

# Psychosis Evidence of autoimmune trigger prompts call for care overhaul

**Hannah Devlin**
*Science correspondent*

One of the country's leading psychiatrists is calling for an overhaul of the diagnosis and treatment of psychotic disorders following evidence that a small but significant number of cases could be triggered by an autoimmune response.

Speaking before the relaunch of a groundbreaking trial in which patients with psychosis were being treated with medicines normally reserved for autoimmune conditions such as arthritis and lupus, Prof Belinda Lennox, the head of psychiatry at the University of Oxford, said she hoped the work would pave the way for new, more targeted approaches to treating conditions such as schizophrenia. This could include some patients being given immunotherapies to treat psychosis symptoms.

"It would be the first time in the whole of psychiatry that we have a diagnosis and a cause for why people develop severe mental illness," she said.

The approach will not be suitable for most patients with psychosis, and Lennox is not challenging the view that mental illnesses can be rooted in traumatic life experiences or other causes. "A problem with the whole of psychiatry is that our diagnoses aren't fit for purpose," she said. "Psychosis is a group of disorders, some of which are neurodevelopmental, some will be people with adverse life experiences that give a vulnerability, and for others it will be an infectious cause. We need a systematic shift in the way we assess and treat people with severe mental illness," she added.

If the trial demonstrates the treatment is effective, Lennox hopes it will help change the way psychosis and schizophrenia are viewed and prompt the development of other new treatments. "It's the most stigmatised of illnesses," she said.

Despite its devastating impact and the significant number of people affected, there has been little progress in diagnosing or treating schizophrenia in recent decades and current drugs work largely by controlling symptoms rather than tackling the underlying cause of the condition.

"We're basically stuck with the same diagnostic systems that we've had since the back end of the 19th century and there have been no really novel treatments since the 1950s," said Lennox. "There are psychological treatments and we treat people in a much kinder way, but we're no way further forward in understanding the causes."

> **'We need a systematic shift in the way we assess and treat people with severe mental illness'**
>
> **Belinda Lennox**
> *University of Oxford*

Lennox believes that immune responses in the brain could play a role in other psychiatric conditions, including bipolar disorder and postnatal psychosis.

The trial was conceived after previous research by Lennox's team found that about one in 12 patients admitted for a first psychotic episode tested positive for antibodies that are known to target brain cells. "These antibodies stick to the neuronal surface and disrupt signalling in the brain," said Lennox.

It is already accepted that the same antibodies can trigger encephalitis, a dangerous swelling of the brain, and these patients can be quickly and successfully treated with immunotherapy. Psychosis is often the first sign of encephalitis, before patients go on to experience physical symptoms including seizures, loss of balance, impaired speech and loss of consciousness.

Lennox's team has published a series of case reports in which patients with psychosis, but no physical symptoms, appeared to benefit from immunotherapies. The trial, which is restarting recruitment after being put on hold during the pandemic, is aiming to secure the "gold standard" evidence of efficacy required to shift clinical practice.

"[These] cases of encephalitis almost all start off with a psychiatric presentation," she said. "But if you start and finish with a psychiatric presentation there's a lot of argument whether it's equally causative."

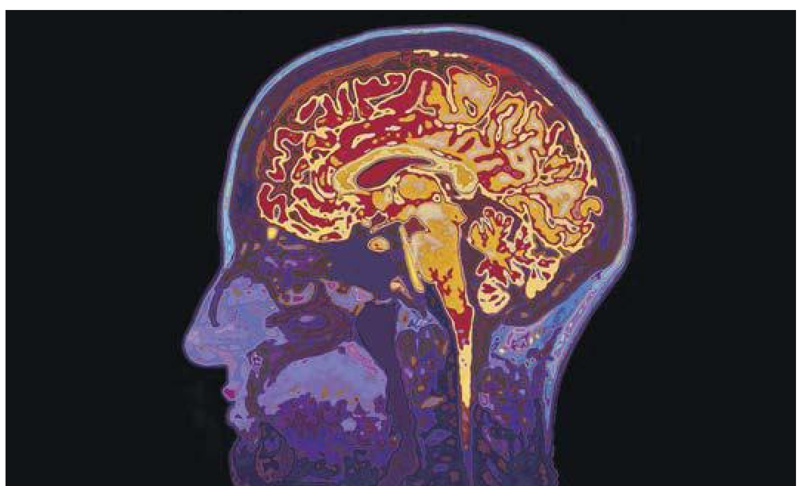
Patients who test positive for the relevant antibodies will be given a two-pronged treatment designed to remove the "bad antibodies" from the brain and dampen the immune system to prevent it pumping out more of them. First, patients will receive intravenous immunoglobulins, antibodies from donor blood samples that are designed to outcompete the problematic antibodies and detach them from the surface of neurons. A month later, patients receive the drug rituximab, which temporarily suppresses the immune system.

"They're both treatments purely targeting the immune system and you wouldn't think they have anything to do with neuroreceptors or [brain] chemicals," said Lennox.

It is not clear what prompts the body to misdirect its immune response against neurons, but one possibility is that a mild, otherwise harmless, infection can kick off an immune response that goes awry. This would fit with the fact that the trial struggled to recruit, and was ultimately put on hold, during the pandemic because so few patients being screened tested positive for the specific brain antibodies.

"During the pandemic, for two years, the rate of antibody positivity fell off a cliff," said Lennox. "It's an indication that maybe it is an infectious trigger that's producing these antibodies. Although it also meant that our trial was derailed."

The team is now hoping to recruit another 40 patients (31 were recruited pre-pandemic) by 2025.



## What is psychosis?
### Causes, symptoms and treatment

**Psychosis is a symptom, or experience, rather than a medical diagnosis in itself and involves losing touch with reality. It can manifest as hallucinations – seeing or hearing things that are not there – or delusions, such as the belief that people are conspiring to spy on you or cause you harm.**

**There is a range of underlying causes for psychosis. An episode can be brought on by a traumatic experience, severe stress, drug use or a side-effect of medication. It can be a one-off experience and some people make a complete recovery. For others, it is linked to a long-term mental health condition, such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.**

**Treatment for psychosis normally involves antipsychotic medicine and talking therapies, which can also help people develop strategies to cope with their condition. In some cases, these treatments help people recover, but for others they help manage symptoms, without resolving the underlying cause. Hannah Devlin**

# Wife and live-in carer found guilty of enslaving her disabled husband

Steven Morris

A wife and a live-in carer have been found guilty of enslaving her vulnerable disabled husband in what is believed to be the first case of its kind.

Sarah Somerset-How and George Webb, who were having an affair, kept Tom Somerset-How in dirty conditions and treated him "like a piece of property".

The pair were charged under modern slavery legislation, typically used when the victim is trafficked or forced to work for no pay.

Sarah Somerset-How, 49, and Webb, 50, were found guilty of holding a person in slavery or servitude.

During legal argument that can only be reported now, the prosecution argued that by being held as "a prisoner in his own home", cut off from family and friends, Tom Somerset-How was in effect being treated as a slave.

Judge Ashworth said there was ample evidence that Sarah Somerset-How and Webb had held him "as if he was a cattle or animal".

The pair left Tom Somerset-How – who has cerebral palsy, is almost blind, uses a wheelchair and needs 24-hour care – in bed for 90% of the time and allowed him a shower once a week. He went for a year without brushing his teeth.

The 40-year-old history graduate eventually raised the alarm about how he was being treated and a rescue operation, compared in court to a hostage extraction involving police and social services, took place.

Paul Cavin KC, prosecuting, told the jury at Portsmouth crown court: "These offences were a deliberate exploitation and effective enslavement of Tom. The defendants treated him like a piece of property instead of a person they should have cared for."

The prosecution had alleged Tom Somerset-How was a "cash cow" and that his money was "plundered". However, Sarah Somerset-How was found not guilty of fraud and theft.

Jurors were told the Somerset-Hows moved into a bungalow in Chichester, West Sussex, in 2010. Webb arrived in 2016 to work as a carer, living in the house.

"Tom gave an estimate that he spent nearly 90% of the next four years in bed," said Cavin. "Every few months, he was allowed to see his mother. He went weeks without showering and almost a year without brushing his teeth. Every aspect of his life was controlled. His independence he had was taken away from him by the defendants.

"He became a prisoner in his own home. He was entirely dependent on his abusers to stay alive."

Tom Somerset-How told a friend in July 2020 about the abuse and the "extraction" followed.

Giving evidence from behind a screen, he said the pair went away for weekends together and left him trapped in bed with just a bottle of squash. "I would go entire weeks without getting out of bed, except for when I desperately needed the toilet," he said. "At one point, I went for five weeks in bed."



▲ *Sarah Somerset-How, 49, and George Webb, 50, were charged under modern slavery legislation*

In February 2020, Webb texted Sarah Somerset-How: "No food for dickhead. If he has two meals he will just shit it all." She replied: "Remember, we are just using him. Dickhead gets paid soon so I will take money out of his account for weed."

Cavin said: "This is a man who had all his autonomy taken away from him. Total ownership had been taken over him in a way that a master does over a dog when he puts him in the kitchen."

The judge said: "There is ample evidence that Tom was held as if he was a cattle or animal."

Webb was convicted of ill-treatment by a care worker, while Sarah Somerset-How, an executive assistant, was convicted of aiding and abetting him. Webb was also found guilty of assault causing actual bodily harm after an incident in which he hit Tom Somerset-How with a shoe.

After the verdicts were delivered, Tom Somerset-How said: "I am very pleased. Justice has been served."

The pair will be sentenced at a later date.

# University embroiled in row over trans rights after film is blocked

Severin Carrell
Libby Brooks




◀ *The University of Edinburgh says its campus should be 'a safe space for difficult conversation', amid talks with pro-trans and gender-critical academics*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALAMY/PA IMAGES

Edinburgh University hopes to defuse a crisis involving gender-critical and pro-trans academics after clashes over the screening of the controversial film Adult Human Female.

University executives are holding talks with both sides after pro-trans activists prevented the gender-critical documentary from being screened on campus for the second time late last month, by blockading a theatre where it was due to be shown.

Edinburgh has found itself at the centre of a wider conflict over gender politics that has affected other universities across the UK, and has recently spilled over to involve the Edinburgh festival fringe.

In a statement, the university said its campus should be "a safe space for difficult conversation [where] different viewpoints are listened to with tolerance". That should include opinions that "may be perceived as harmful and upsetting to others".

Yesterday afternoon The Stand comedy venue announced it would now allow a fringe event by the MP Jo Cherry KC to go ahead after accepting that its decision earlier this month to cancel the event because of her gender-critical beliefs was unlawful.

University sources have confirmed that the university's principal, Peter Mathieson, is due to meet representatives of the gender-critical group Edinburgh Academics for Academic Freedom (EAFAF) next week as part of wider efforts to settle the dispute.

EAFAF said it welcomed the "robust" stance being taken by Mathieson over the cancellation of its event and said they would press him to ensure it could be screened successfully at the third attempt. "We will ask that management work with us in the coming months to begin to address the deep-seated problems that underlie what happened" to those earlier screenings, it said.

Meanwhile, coordinators of the pro-trans Staff Pride Network, which is backed by the student union and by trade unions on campus, have had talks with the university's equalities and diversity officers, but have yet to be invited to meet Mathieson.

The Staff Pride group said it was willing to begin talks about resolving the crisis but said they needed clear assurances that the university acknowledged the harmful impact the film would have on trans and non-binary staff and students.

"We have shown willing to engage in all forms of mediation the university has to offer. Agreed solutions have to be founded on principles of inclusion that ensure the safety and wellbeing of our LGBTQ+ staff and students at the university," it said.

Adult Human Female, which asserts that women are defined by their biological sex and that women's rights are being threatened, is regarded by trans rights groups as inflammatory, trans-phobic and scientifically inaccurate.

EAFAF's first attempt to screen the film on campus last December was disrupted by trans rights activists and then cancelled amid chaotic scenes.

The university is also bracing itself for a further protests over an EAFAF event on campus on Saturday 20 April, when Cherry will be joined by the human rights lawyer Akua Reindorf KC for a debate on academic freedom and the law.

The university said: "We remain disappointed that protesters prevented us from screening the documentary on two occasions. We understand, however, the strength of feeling within the university around the screening of film."

▼ *Lisbon at sunset. The Portuguese city was judged budget-friendly, and Amsterdam, bottom, was most costly*
PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN3810/GETTY/ISTOCKPHOTO



# Lisbon revealed as the best-value city to visit for a European holiday



**Nazia Parveen**

In an annual travel survey that analyses typical tourist costs in 35 European cities, Lisbon has emerged as the best-value location for a city break on the continent – beating traditional budget-friendly eastern European destinations.

The Post Office Travel Money City Costs Barometer found the Portuguese capital won the top spot ahead of Vilnius, Lithuania's capital. Two other past winners – Krakow (third) and Athens (fourth) – complete the top four cities.

The barometer's ranking is produced by an analysis of 12 typical tourist costs, including an evening meal for two with wine, drinks, two nights' three-star accommodation, sightseeing and city transport.

It is the second time in the survey's history that a city in western Europe has beaten an eastern European city to first place.

At £225, Lisbon's costs were just 2% higher than last summer. Two nights in a three-star hotel averaged £121, only 5.2% up on 2022, compared with rises of more than 30% in every other city surveyed. As a result, prices in the Portuguese capital were less than one-third of those in Venice (£687) and Amsterdam (£727), Europe's most expensive cities.

Vilnius (£226), rated top city by the Post Office in 2019 and 2020, was a close runner-up to Lisbon – just 25p more expensive for the 12 items. Two other past winners – Krakow (£251) and Athens (£262) – were also singled out for good value.

The research found that British tourists can also bag a city break bargain by choosing Riga (£285), Zagreb (£330), Budapest (£331) or Warsaw (£331) in eastern Europe, or Portugal's second city Porto (£325) or Lille (£332) in western Europe.

However, the cost comparison found that the weaker pound and surging hotel prices mean tourists will need to choose their destinations carefully or face paying up to 76% more than last year.

Laura Plunkett, head of travel money at the Post Office, said: "The increased price of accommodation could add hundreds of pounds to the overall cost of a holiday, so travellers need to budget carefully for this.

"We also advise checking costs for meals, drinks and sightseeing before booking … As this year's barometer shows, there are wide variations in costs between cities and people who are prepared to swap destination can make their pounds stretch much further by choosing a cheaper capital like Lisbon or Vilnius."

Closer to home, Cardiff (£387) rates as best value of the four UK capitals, at least 27% cheaper than Edinburgh (£535). London and Belfast both rated among the 10 dearest cities in the survey. At £561, London has seen a big price rise, mostly because the cost of two nights' accommodation has trebled to an average of £361 since 2021. The same applies for Belfast (£562), where accommodation has risen from £221 to £392, although its total is 6% lower than Dublin across the border.

However, Dublin is still a good option for a cultural break, emerging from this year's survey as the city with the lowest price tag for cultural sightseeing.

This is because entry to its leading museums and galleries is free, while the charge for its top heritage attraction, Kilmainham Gaol, is just £7.

## How the cities compare

| Best value | Most expensive |
|---|---|
| 1. Lisbon | 1. Amsterdam |
| 2. Vilnius | 2. Venice |
| 3. Krakow | 3. Paris |
| 4. Athens | 4. Dublin |
| 5. Riga | 5. Copenhagen |
| 6. Porto | 6. Florence |
| 7. Zagreb | 7. Belfast |
| 8. Budapest | 8. London |
| 9. Warsaw | 9. Geneva |
| 10. Lille | 10. Berlin |

# Met officers face criminal inquiry over fatal fall after Taser shooting

**Vikram Dodd**
*Police and crime correspondent*

Two Metropolitan police officers have been placed under criminal investigation after a man was shot with a Taser and then fell five floors to his death.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct made the announcement yesterday, following the incident last month in Peckham, south London.

Both officers are under criminal investigation for gross negligence manslaughter, with one also being investigated for unlawful act manslaughter, the police watchdog said. They have also been placed under discipline investigation for gross negligence. The IOPC stressed this did not mean criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings would follow.

The Met said both police constables had been suspended from duty and were attached to the central south basic command unit. The force confirmed that one of the officers had fired the Taser while on the balcony.

DCS Seb Adjei-Addoh said: "Please be assured that we are continuing to fully support the IOPC as they work to establish the facts around this tragic death. The officers concerned are cooperating with the IOPC."

Police were called to a flat in a tower block on 12 April following reports a man was shouting, and later officers received reports a man was threatening to jump from a balcony.

The IOPC said that at around 2am officers forced their way into the flat and "tried to persuade the man to come inside from the balcony and requested that a police negotiator attend the scene". "Evidence at this stage indicates that an officer discharged their Taser, shortly before the man fell from the balcony railing at around 3.20am. The man fell five floors to the ground and was transported to hospital with critical injuries. He sadly died later that day."

The IOPC director, Amanda Rowe, said: "Our thoughts are with the man who died and we sincerely hope that he is formally identified and that his family are able to be notified. This was a tragic incident and we recognise that the circumstances surrounding the man's death have understandably caused concern within the community."

She said it was important that a thorough, independent investigation was carried out. "Police officers are able to use force in the course of their duties and we will examine whether any force that was used was reasonable, appropriate and proportionate in these circumstances."

After the investigation, the IOPC will decide whether to refer the matter to the Crown Prosecution Service for a charging decision, and whether any officers should face disciplinary proceedings.

# Coroner condemns lack of help for woman who died months after rape

**Steven Morris**

A senior coroner has expressed deep concern over the way police and mental health services dealt with the case of a vulnerable woman who fell from a railway bridge four months after reporting that she had been raped.

Tamsin Dolamore, a 24-year-old carer, was found on the tracks near a railway station in Cornwall and died in hospital the following day having suffered head injuries and a cardiac arrest. During an inquest in Truro, it emerged there was a delay in appointing a sexual offences liaison officer (Solo) to her and shortages of detectives to investigate sexual attacks.

Her GP had said her world was "turned upside down" by the rape, but she was not seen by mental health services and was told she would have to wait five or six months for help from charities for survivors because of the demand on their resources.

"It is striking the extent to which she was left to deal with matters on her own," the senior coroner for Cornwall, Andrew Cox, said. "Rape has to be one of the most traumatic of crimes. Its survivors require and deserve immediate support and assistance. When she most needed it Tamsin did not receive it. As a society we need to do better than this."

Dolamore was described in court by her family as "kind and caring" but lacking in self-confidence, too trusting and a poor judge of character. She was sexually assaulted as a schoolgirl and in the autumn of 2017 she reported to police she had been raped, though she did not tell her family about either attack and they only found out after her death.

On the night of 8 January 2018 she left the home of a friend, Nick Midwood, after an argument and went to the bridge. He followed and dialled 999 when he saw her body on the tracks, telling the call handler: "I think she's just jumped off the bridge." He described her as a "diamond" but also said: "I got a bit angry with her."



◀ *Tamsin Dolamore, 24, received no help from police, health services or charities after being raped*

> *'It is striking the extent to which she was left to deal with matters on her own'*
>
> **Andrew Cox**
> *Senior coroner*

One of the issues the six-day inquest has looked at was if a third party was involved in Dolamore's death and the coroner asked Midwood directly if he had pushed her. He replied: "No, I did not." The coroner accepted this was true.

The inquest heard that a police investigator had been appointed to Dolamore's case at the end of September 2017. It had been intended that a sexual offences liaison officer would be allocated at the same time but this did not happen until a month later.

The court heard there is still a shortage of officers working on rape inquires. In January there were about 600 rape or serious sexual assault cases ongoing in Devon and Cornwall. There were 40 detectives working on these cases – but 22 vacancies. Cox said he was "troubled" by this adding: "This is bound to have an impact on the amount or quality of work that can be done."

Though Dolamore's GP was concerned about her mental health, neither of the two organisations she was directed towards helped her. She had "fallen between the two organisations", said the coroner. "The mental health provision in this county falls significantly short of the need that exists." The coroner noted the charities that work with victims had waiting lists of up to six months. He said he was surprised a "patchwork" of charitable support rather than statutory services did so much work for survivors.

It was also revealed that the 999 call was wrongly categorised, which led to a delay of up to 27 minutes reaching her, though the inquest was told her injuries were so serious that she could not have survived.

The coroner gave an open conclusion and said he would propose writing to the police about its staffing and the government on the issue of support for victims of sexual assaults.

*Samaritans can be contacted on freephone 116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org or jo@samaritans.ie.*



# Brazilian jiu-jitsu

# Getting ripped and keeping up with the tech bros



◀ *'You're unlikely to get injured, except by your own idiocy …' Zoe Williams grapples with Pedro Garcia*
PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID LEVENE/THE GUARDIAN



**Zoe Williams**

As unlikely as this sounds, more than one person has tried to sell me on Brazilian jiu-jitsu as a feminist martial art, but, from a distance, it seems to appeal more to a certain kind of man.

Most recently, Mark Zuckerberg revealed on his social media accounts this week that he had won gold and silver in a Brazilian jiu-jitsu tournament. He joins various actors who may have confused themselves with their roles: Henry Cavill, who starred in Superman; Guy Ritchie, director of King Arthur: Legend of the Sword; Tom Hardy, of Mad Max: Fury Road fame. Russell Brand also enjoys the martial art, always at the front of the queue whenever anything fashionable and ostentatiously muscular – either physically or politically – is in the offing.

Pedro Garcia, the 44-year-old founder of PG Academy ("I'm so lucky I'm called Garcia," he said, "because I just used my initials but now I can pretend it stands for 'pure grappling'"), explains its popularity. "People do yoga, right? We call this involuntary yoga." Wait, what? "Because I can make you bend."

The sport came out of the Japanese diaspora in Brazil, one family in particular, the Gracies, founding an academy to teach a version of Kosen judo, which is predominantly ground work. Judo and jiu-jitsu, despite having a lot of similarities, have a critical difference: "In judo, if you take someone down and you hold them for a few seconds, then you win; that's the rule. But when you do jiu-jitsu, once you get to the ground, that's when it continues."



▲ *Mark Zuckerberg won two medals in a jiu-jitsu tournament this week*

Most of jiu-jitsu happens on the mats, and this isn't considered very elegant or spectator-worthy by the martial arts purists who inhabit, for instance, Olympic committees. That doesn't mean there's not a competition circuit for jiu-jitsu; there is, and it reads like the grand tour of the international playboy: Miami, Rio de Janeiro, Paris. Zuckerberg won his title in Silicon Valley. His coach said afterwards: "He excels. He's one of the best students I've ever had." This annoys me, inexplicably: what's it to me if Mark Zuckerberg is good at fighting?

I could tell you the rules, but this is not a sport you could learn from a book. The principle is that you take your opponent's strength and use it against them to make them fall over, then carry on using their strength against them until they concede. It's like physics, made of arms and legs. Core strength probably comes into it, too – I wouldn't know.

You're always trying manoeuvre yourself into a position where your strongest part is up against your opponent's weakest, whether that's a quicksilver wrist slipping away from their thumb or your hamstrings against their biceps. The advantage can flip in an instant, and there's a mind-game element to it – sometimes it will suit you to make your opponent think they're winning.

"It is a misconception," Garcia says, "that this is a sport for supermen. It's a misconception that you have to be big and strong." He pauses to adjust that, slightly: "Obviously, it does help. But I have students that are maybe 60 kilos. I have a nurse in her 50s, very light, seems really sweet and friendly, but once she got the hang of it …" He shakes his head, awestruck.

Even if you did go into it because you had delusions of greatness, the sport would soon shake you out of that. It's very character building, Garcia says. If you lack confidence, you'll gain it. If you're arrogant, it will be good for you to have to surrender to someone much smaller or 20 years older.

The bit I'm sceptical about, until I try it, is the workout potential: people say it's a 1000-calorie-an-hour burner, and those stats are pretty unusual. (For comparison, running would burn 700, strenuous cycling, 600.) But once you try it, well, you still won't understand it, but you'll believe it. Some combination of your bodyweight, your opponent's, the mental agility you're ideally deploying, the scrambly, anything-it-takes spirit, requires extreme physical exertion. There are other martial arts that will exhaust you faster – Thai kickboxing is notorious – but if you want to get ripped without knowing quite how, do jiu-jitsu.

"We don't hit," Garcia says, "it's only grabbing, grappling. Soon you realise that you don't need to hit people, you can restrain, you can hold people, and you still get the same buzz out of it."

It's hard to get injured in jiu-jitsu: it's unlikely to happen by accident. Garcia has never had an injury, in 16 years. You'll probably only come to mischief through your own idiocy, by not conceding fast enough.

That may or may not be why the assorted bros like it: it's feminist, by the way, because of the self-defence element, plus the fact that size isn't always the deciding factor. But I ought to make clear that all martial arts people say things like that.

# Medicines courier Sciensus was told of failings three years ago

**Andrew Gregory**
*Health editor*

The boss of a private healthcare company exposed by the Guardian for putting seriously ill children and adults at risk was warned it was failing patients three years ago.

Darryn Gibson, the chief executive of Sciensus, Britain's biggest medicines courier, was told in November 2020 that patients with bleeding disorders were being left dangerously exposed to internal bleeding, with little or no treatment at home as a result of botched, delayed or missed deliveries.

Gibson received the written warning from Kate Burt, the chief executive of the Haemophilia Society, a leading health charity, after she had become outraged at how vulnerable patients were being let down.

Sciensus blamed IT issues and promised action. But three years later patients remained at "very serious" risk of harm because of "recurring" problems with the company, Burt said.

"We continue to receive complaints about missing, incomplete or inaccurate deliveries and are very concerned to see the same issues recurring, indicating that far more needs to be done to improve Sciensus's ordering and delivery systems."

Burt spoke out after a Guardian investigation revealed serious and significant concerns raised by patients, clinicians and health groups about Sciensus. Sick children and adults were suffering avoidable harm and becoming more unwell as a result of failings by the company, it found.

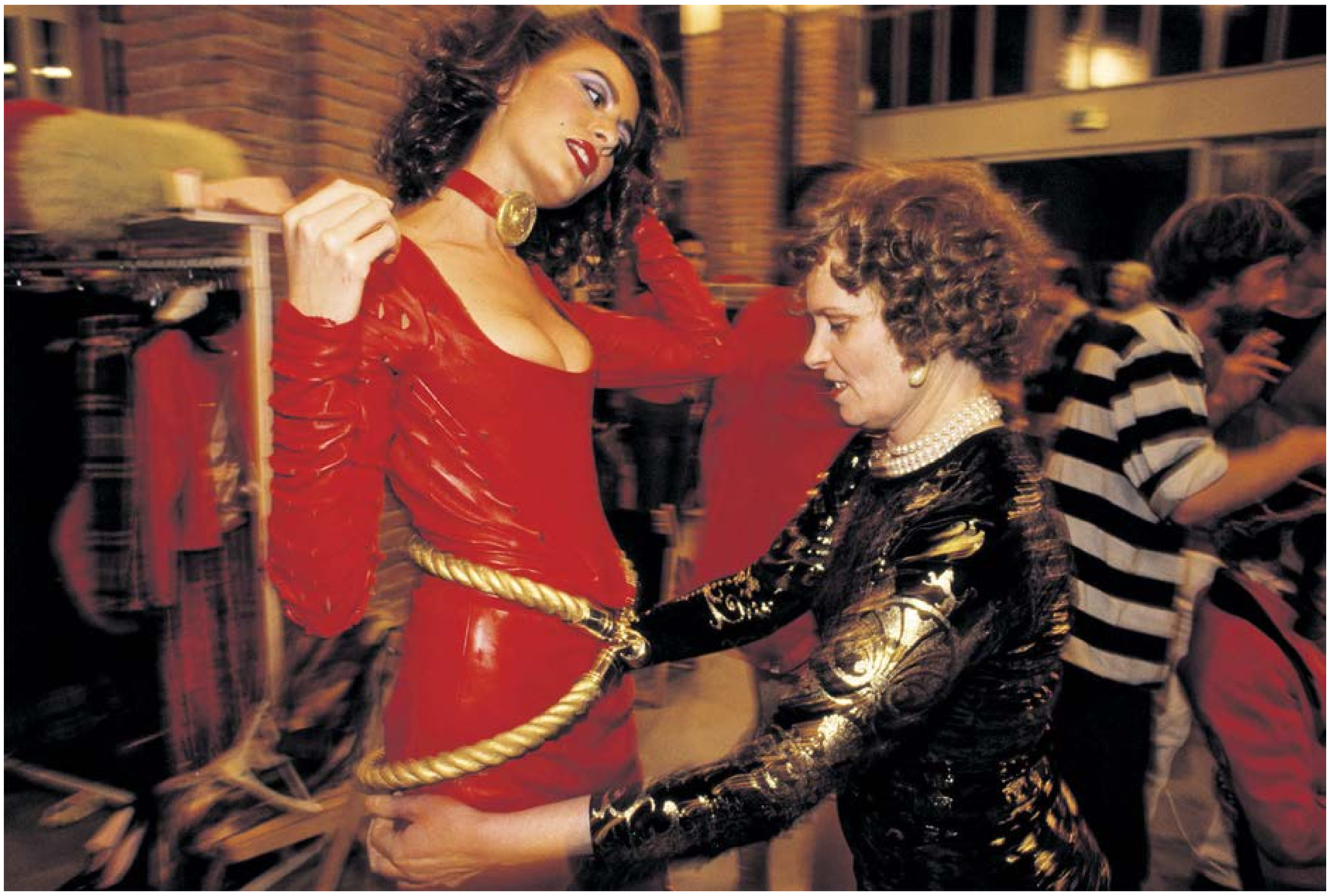
"The impact of this inefficient and erratic service is very serious," said Burt. "Missing or delaying a treatment puts people with haemophilia at greater risk of painful bleeds, joint damage and, potentially, emergency trips to hospital.

"Unreliable deliveries not only cause stress and anxiety for people in need of their treatment but also result in unacceptable waste at huge cost to the NHS."

Sciensus, which is based in Burton upon Trent, is paid millions of pounds each year by the NHS to transport vital drugs and medical items to about 200,000 people with conditions including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, dementia and HIV. Its services are also privately funded.

The CQC said it was reviewing concerns raised about the company. After the Guardian investigation, more than 100 patients have come forward to share their concerns.

Burt said she believed the problems causing recurring worries for patients were widespread. A Sciensus spokesperson said: "If any patients have concerns, we would urge them to contact us – we have a priority helpline and also offer same-day emergency dispensing and delivery."



◀ *Vivienne Westwood in 1991. She transformed the corset from a forgotten undergarment*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN VAN HASSELT/ GETTY IMAGES

# How Westwood cinched it Exhibition puts designer at heart of the corset renaissance

**Lauren Cochrane**

Vivienne Westwood's contribution to modern fashion runs from punk to pearls. But the corset, the item that perhaps defines her legacy, is enjoying a moment in the wider fashion spotlight.

An exhibition of the designer's corsets at the flagship store in Mayfair has been a star of May's London craft week. This history of Westwood corsets, which closes tomorrow, runs from the first she produced in the mid-1980s to those from her most recent collection before her death in December. It also includes those created by her partner and husband, Andreas Kronthaler, providing insight into how Westwood developed this signature item over decades.

It is good timing: corsets have become fashionable again in recent years – seen on streaming boxsets such as Bridgerton and its spinoff Queen Charlotte, at brands including Schiaparelli, Fendi and KNWLS, and worn by celebrities including Adele, Billie Eilish and Bella Hadid.

Vintage Westwood corsets are now highly prized. A 1993 design, with a François Boucher painting printed on it, is currently priced at over £32,000 on 1stdibs. A new Westwood corset is relatively affordable, by contrast, at £725.



▲ *Lupita Nyong'o wears Vivienne Westwood to a premiere last year*

The designer first reinvented the corset by updating a structure that can be traced back to the 18th century. "Vivienne literally revolutionised corsets, she did it with the eyes of the modern era," says Dolce Cioffi, the heritage manager for the company, who worked on the exhibition.

Cioffi argues Westwood is central to the current vogue for corsets. "She was the first one who did underwear as outerwear," she says. "She revolutionised the way we perceive something that was repressive and that was made into a tool of female empowerment."

Historical research was central to Westwood's work. "By referencing the old you create the new, this is what she used to say."

The exhibition begins with a version of the so-called "portrait corset", the relatively simple design that Westwood first included in her 1987 autumn/ winter collection, and that the brand still produces today.

Westwood removed the whale bones traditionally used in the corset, added stretch fabric at the side, and replaced the lacing at the back with a zip, providing much more freedom of movement.

Also included are three corsets designed to be worn by men, a design that combined inspirations including Charles II and bikers, and a dress worn by Lupito Nyong'o that combines a corset with a skirt made from a single piece of crystal-beaded chiffon fabric, showcasing Westwood's zero-waste cutting method.

Corsets for men have been on the up recently – Bad Bunny wore a corset hoodie to Coachella – but they have been part of the Westwood universe since the 1990s.

This exhibition's highlights are two corset jackets exquisitely embroidered with glass beads to represent the male torso.

They were originally part of the first menswear show in Milan in 1996, and created in collaboration with Mr Pearl, the corset maker who famously had an 18-inch waist from wearing corsets.

"Andreas wore this jacket for the after dinner of the show," says Cioffi. "He loves this sort of thing – the more constricted, the better!"

Kronthaler's enthusiasm for the male corset also translated into his designs. His version of the male corset – designed for spring/ summer 2020 – is also on display.

"Vivienne was a pioneer of unisex. Andreas came up with the idea of developing a corset that was made to fit the [male] body rather than readapting a female structure," says Cioffi.

"We are supposed to change our shape to have children. The structure of the male body is stiffer."

# H&M's Mugler collaboration has people waiting in line

**Chloe Mac Donnell**

It is one of the few things apart from Christmas sales to guarantee overnight queues outside shops on the high street, and H&M's latest designer collaboration – this time with luxury French fashion house Mugler – had people lined up around the block.

People braved chilly temperatures to be there when H&M's London flagship store on Regent Street opened its doors on Thursday – despite the Mugler H&M collection launching online (with additional exclusive pieces).

At the front of the queue was Roberto Escorcio, a 31-year-old freelance recruiter who has been at every single H&M designer launch since 2004. He had waited outside from 3pm on Wednesday in order to guarantee his coveted place.

"I would never stay at home to shop online," he said. "It's not just about buying the clothes. I always meet incredible people. I'm getting married soon and 50% of the guests are friends I made from queueing in the past."

Mugler is known for its figure hugging designs featuring nude illusion panels and spiral cut outs that have been worn by Beyoncé, Dua Lipa and Kylie Jenner. Price tags for its mainline collection usually hover around the £600 mark. For its collaboration with the fast-fashion retailer a mesh corset top cost £79.99 while two-tone jeans were £149.



◀ *Outfits from H&M's latest collaboration are selling on ebay for triple the price*
PHOTOGRAPH: MUGLER H&M

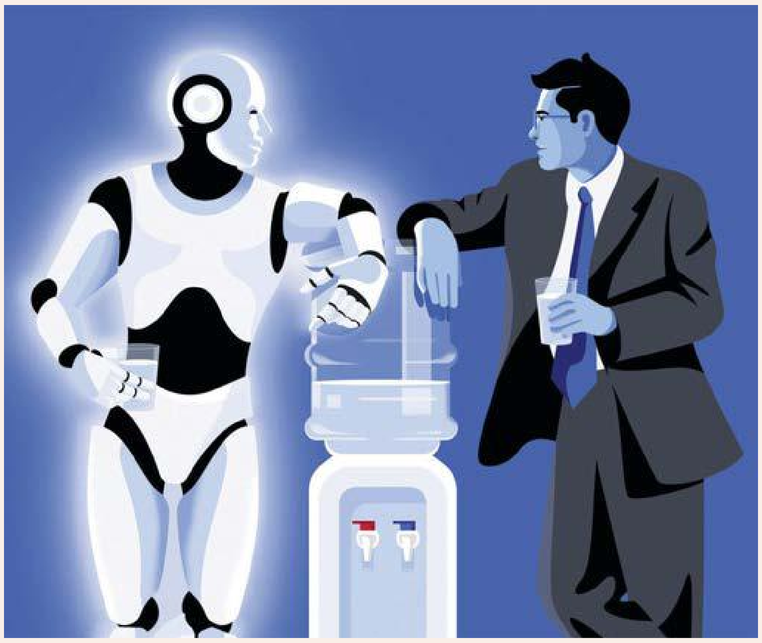
At 8.59am staff wearing black T-shirts emblazoned with the launch date kickstarted a noisy countdown before letting in the first customers.

Naomi Luy, a 22-year-old retail worker from Birmingham had travelled through the night before joining the queue at 5.30am. She bought several pieces including the spiral denim jeans and matching jacket. "I got everything I wanted," she said. "I spent £490. I think it's good value as one pair of Mugler jeans usually costs £580."

The collaborations are popular with fans of the brands, but also with those looking to turn a quick profit. Just 60 minutes after the collection launched, sold out pieces began to appear on eBay, many listed for double and even triple the original price.

Some shoppers who queued with the idea of reselling carried large wheely bags.

"It's not fair," said Tanya Schwartz, a silversmith in her 50s. "To queue and then walk to the nearest coffee shop to list it online, I think that's wrong. We are passionate about what we want and how we are going to wear it. They just want to make a profit."



# Robot v human

# What the AI revolution could mean for world of work

Philippa Kelly

In 1965, the political scientist and Nobel laureate Herbert Simon said: "Machines will be capable, within 20 years, of doing any work a man can do." Today, in what is increasingly referred to as the fourth industrial revolution, the arrival of artificial intelligence in the workplace is reigniting similar concerns. But what could these sectors look like in the future?

## Healthcare

Until now, the use of AI in medicine has centred on MRI scans, X-rays and the identification of tumours, says Philip Torr, professor of engineering science at the University of Oxford. Research is also being conducted into dementia diagnosis via smartphone. Apps could track the length of time it takes a user to complete a routine task such as finding a contact, and flag an increase in this time as a possible sign of the syndrome.

But, Torr says it is large language models (LLMs) such



as ChatGPT that will have the biggest impact for patients and practitioners.

He gives the example of arriving at hospital, answering questions and then being moved on, only to be asked the same questions. Instead, answers could be logged via an AI-driven app, which would then pass each patient's information to the relevant staff.

"What does a doctor do?" Torr asks. "He or she has got knowledge, asks you questions, listens to the answers and then comes to a diagnosis. And I think all of that can be automated."

Diagnosis by algorithm – or automated surgery, which he also imagines is a likely development – may not prove popular with patients, he says. "You can imagine making some sort of robotic salesman. But people would still want to see the real thing."

Where the technology could be more welcome is among health service central planners. With large, complex organisations to run, AI could help with plans and schedules to decrease mounting pressures faced by medical services worldwide.



## Education

AI is used in schools, colleges and universities in limited ways. As automation makes its way further into the classroom, Rose Luckin, professor of learner centred design at University College London Knowledge Lab, says the choices we make now will decide its impact in the future. "There's a horrible, dystopian version where you hand over far too much to the AI," she says. "And you end up with an education system that's much cheaper, where you have a lot of the delivery done by AI systems."

Teachers given help with marking and lesson planning by LLMs would be left with more time to focus on other work. But in an effort to cut costs, the "teaching" of lessons could also be delegated to machines, robbing teachers and students of human interaction.

"Of course, that will be for the less well-off students," Luckin says. "The more well-off students will still have lots of lovely one-to-one human interactions, alongside some very smartly integrated AI."

Luckin wants a future where technology cuts teacher workloads without disrupting pastoral care. "That human interaction is something to be cherished, not thrown out," she says.



## Call centres

Known for their high staff turnover, call centres are often stress-filled environments in which staff spend much of their day attempting to calm angry customers. For this reason, says Peter Mantello, professor of media and cyber-politics at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan, the centres will increasingly become a place for what is known as emotional AI.

Using voice-tone recognition, such tools allow the emotional state of customers and staff to be gauged. This can help staff better assist callers, while managers can take better care of workers. But Mantello warns that the technology is also a form of surveillance.

"So in the workplace, this idea of being positive, authentic and happy is going to be more and more linked to productivity," he says.

Mantello's concerns about emotional AI in call centres and similar working environments stem from the possibility that the data AI generates could be misused by those in power, for example, a manager uses productivity data to dismiss a worker they dislike.

The growth of such technology has implications for workers in other sectors. From public relations to bartending, presenting a positive demeanour has long been a part of certain roles, but Mantell says: "I think we're going to see emotion play an even more important part in creating or measuring the idea of a good worker."



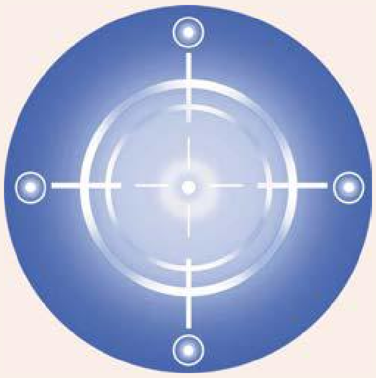
## Agriculture

According to Robert Sparrow, professor of philosophy at Monash University's data futures institute in Australia, many areas of agriculture will prove resistant to increased automation. While farmers already benefit from AI in climate forecasting and pest and disease modelling, he says that for the technology to cause real disruption, there would need to be significant progress in robotics.

"I can get ChatGPT to write better essays than many of my students," he says. "But if you asked a robot to walk into this room and empty the wastepaper basket or make me a cup of coffee, it simply couldn't do that." This lack of dexterity and inability to cope with unpredictable spaces or tasks, combined with the cost of such technology, makes robots unlikely to replace agricultural workers in the near future, Sparrow believes.

But he describes agriculture as a technologically progressive industry. Food often travels across the world to reach consumers, and Sparrow says it is in the logistics of farming that AI has potential to increase efficiency – although not without risks for human workers.

"All the people working to determine which pallets need to go on which truck, to get to which ship, to get to market on time – if they all lost their jobs because of improvements in AI, it's not at all obvious that they will find jobs elsewhere," he says.



## Military

Sparrow says military investment in AI is high and the belief it will drive the future of warfare is common. However, despite the introduction of semi-autonomous drones, tanks and submarines, the technology is used less than one might imagine.

This is likely to change, though, particularly for those who serve at sea or in the air, says Sparrow. "I'm not alone in thinking that, in the future, human beings won't be able to survive air combat. Flying without a pilot can be lighter, faster, more manoeuvrable and also more expendable."

He also believes that commands could eventually be delivered by AI, rather than by senior officers. Although humans would remain involved in decision-making, the possibility of automation bias – the human tendency to defer to machines – raises concerns.

Sparrow gives the example of a battalion sent into heavy enemy fire by an AI general – something he acknowledges human generals may also need to do. "You know those people are going to be killed," he says, "but that's harder to stomach if a machine gave the order."

Autonomous warfare conducted from a distance could also lead to changes in military culture and the way in which working in the sector is perceived. While traits such as courage, mercy and compassion are often attributed to soldiers, Sparrow says AI-driven fighting would "make it very hard to maintain these illusions".

Changes in public opinion aside, the positives of removing military personnel from the dangers of direct combat are clear. However, Sparrow still has serious concerns about a future in which humans play a lesser role than technology in warfare and believes that automated weapons systems could one day be capable of drawing humans into war.

He is similarly sceptical about the future of AI across all workplaces. "The idea that these tools will leave the core of the job intact is often a marketing pitch," he says. "If the technology is genuinely better than a person at the role, why employ people?"

ILLUSTRATIONS: NATHALIE LEES/THE GUARDIAN

**Inside Saturday**
**10 brilliant things to do in Poland**
*From buzzy cities to beaches and festivals*
*Page 79 →*



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# Failures in support to man who starved to death 'shocking' – report

**Patrick Butler**
*Social policy editor*

Welfare officials failed to properly identify the risk of harm to Errol Graham, a severely mentally ill man whose disability benefit payments they cut off and who died of starvation eight months later, an official report has found.

An independent safeguarding review into the "shocking and disturbing" events leading to Graham's tragic and lonely death concluded multiple failings by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), his GP practice, and social landlord meant chances to save him were missed.

Describing Graham as a "man in acute mental distress who had shut himself away from the world", the adult safeguarding board for Nottingham said decisions taken by all three agencies had exacerbated his problems towards the end of his life rather than supported him. In the months before his death his disability benefits were stopped, triggering the automatic cancellation of his housing benefit, pushing him into £1,000 in rent arrears, the disconnection of his gas supplies, and moves to evict him.

The emaciated body of Graham, 57, was found by bailiffs who broke down the door of his Nottingham home to evict him in June 2018. He was penniless, had no heating or hot water, and there was no food in the flat apart from two out of date tins of fish.

The review, which refers to Graham as "Billy", said: "There were a series of missed opportunities to share information between services. Had information been shared, this may have revealed the true nature of Billy's mental health torment and mobilised the care he needed."



▲ *Errol Graham starved to death after his disability payments ceased*

Graham, a grandfather and former amateur footballer with a long history of mental illness had become disengaged from family and support services in the final stages of his life as his wellbeing deteriorated and he became withdrawn and socially isolated.

The review said DWP and Nottingham City Homes had failed to understand why Graham did not respond to their letters, texts and home visits, and so did not grasp the extent of his vulnerability when they left him without money, food and on the verge of homelessness.

Although both agencies had followed their own procedures correctly, the review makes clear such procedures were based on "partial information and misconceptions" about why Graham had refused to engage with them.

The review published a poignant note left by Graham and found in his flat after his death in which he eloquently describes the fear, anxiety and anguish brought on by his depression. "All I want in life is to live normally, That would be the answer to my prayers," he wrote.

The review makes it clear that while Graham had demonstrated "self-neglecting behaviours" and had effectively withdrawn all contact with services the "final detrimental impact on his wellbeing was through the responses by agencies, cutting off access to those basic physical requirements that were essential to his life."

It said a key lesson from Graham's death was that his refusal to engage with support services did not negate his vulnerability and was not an excuse for inaction on the part of service providers. "Indeed, non-engagement may be a sign of increased vulnerability," it concluded. Alison Burton, Graham's daughter in law, welcomed many aspects of the report, in particular the way it identified how shortcomings in services had let Graham down. But she said going forward the DWP must accept a legal duty of care to prevent vulnerable claimants slipping though the safety net.

The chair of Nottingham City's Safeguarding Adults Board, Lesley Hutchinson, said: "This review looked into the shocking circumstances of a man's death where the intervention of agencies exacerbated his problems rather than providing support. I offer my heartfelt condolences to all who knew and loved [Errol]."

Nottingham City Housing Services (formerly Nottingham City Homes), the GP practice and the DWP all told the report they had taken steps to improve information sharing and improve safeguards for vulnerable claimants.

An inquest into the case in 2019 found there were "holes" in the safety net around Graham. A subsequent judicial review brought by Graham's family which sought to prove the DWP had acted unlawfully by failing to protect was unsuccessful.

A DWP spokesperson said the review recognised the significant improvements it had made to processes since Graham's death.

# 'This is a crisis'

# Three stabbing deaths on one day in London highlight the pain of youth knife crime



◀ Renell Charles, 16, had made a film at his school last year about knife violence. He was killed on 5 May. Below, police officers at the scene of a fatal stabbing in Hackney Wick, east London, in February
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: MARCIN NOWAK/LNP



**Emine Sinmaz**

'People are dying out here," said Renell Charles in a haunting video about knife crime, filmed at his school last year. "Innocent people are being killed, and it's young black boys just like me."

Eight months later, the 16-year-old Arsenal fan was killed. A prosecutor said he was ambushed with a machete as he left school in Walthamstow, London, on 5 May.

He was not the only one. On the eve of the coronation, with much of the nation looking the other way, the teenager was one of three people stabbed to death in separate incidents in the east of the capital.

Wazabakana Elenda "Jordan" Kukabu, 18, was found with a stab wound to his chest near Dagenham Heathway tube station after police were called to reports of men armed with machetes, while Sebastian Zon, 27, was killed at a flat in Hackney.

The Labour MP Stella Creasy said the spate of stabbings showed that the "epidemic" of youth crime needed urgent action.

"No family should have to deal with the pain of losing a child, let alone to do so at the hands of another - yet across the country many are and many more are living with the epidemic of youth and violent crime that we are facing," she said.

Knife crime is a complex issue. In recent years, there has been growing acceptance that societal factors are its driving forces.

A study titled Young People and Street Crime, commissioned by the Youth Justice Board across 32 London boroughs, illustrated that when other relevant social and economic factors were taken into account, race and ethnicity had no significance at all.

While it is too early to know exactly what was behind these particular stabbings, it has left families bereft.

Renell, known affectionately as Renz, was allegedly chased before being stabbed in the chest and back with a machete outside Kelmscott school, where he was a promising pupil preparing to sit his GCSEs.

A memorial of flowers, an Arsenal shirt, and Renell's favourite snacks including packets of Skittles and cartons of KA fruit drinks, now mark the spot where he collapsed and died outside a bike shop.

A shopkeeper described seeing Renell's distraught mother arriving at the scene minutes later. "She was kissing his face when his body was here. But she wasn't able to say even a single word," he said. The man, who did not want to be named, added: "The police did CPR, but he was gone."

In the video filmed last September, Renell spoke candidly in his school uniform about how crime had robbed him of friends, saying: "We deserve a chance to show that not all black boys are just tough, hard gangsters."

His words were filmed by an artist and youth worker, Kay Rufai, as part of the Smile-ing Boys Project, an eight-week programme that aims to address the mental health needs of black teenage boys.

The acclaimed film-maker told the Guardian that Renell was "super intelligent" with an "incredible level of emotional maturity". In their first meeting, Rufai said he had asked the teenager, who was then 15, to write his feelings down.

"The first thing he wrote was: 'Trapped in a cycle and I really am trying so hard to get out,'" Rufai said. "I was so just taken by him, by his honesty, by his sense of introspection, and his desire to do so much to extricate himself from the proximity of things that often didn't have positive outcomes."

Renell's headteacher, Sam Jones, also paid tribute to the teenager as he said the attack marked the "darkest of days".

He said: "Renell was a bright, capable, charming, talented, popular, charismatic young man who had great potential. His smile lit up the room. It is heartbreaking to know that this potential will now not be realised.

"I readily admit that I am still in a state of shock, disbelief, anger, upset, regret and a myriad of other emotions."

Jordan Kukabu's uncle, Michel Pongo, a Labour councillor in Barking and Dagenham, said his family were also in shock at their own personal tragedy.

"It was with great sadness that this afternoon I learned that my nephew, Jordan, 18, had been stabbed to death in Dagenham last night. His mother is inconsolable," he tweeted last Saturday. He also made a plea to those who carry weapons, writing: "Drop your knife … before it is too late."

Hours after Renell was attacked, and a few miles east, Kukabu was found stabbed on Parsloes Avenue, near Dagenham Heathway tube station.

Police said they had been called just before midnight to reports of men armed with machetes. People leaving a pub looked on in disbelief.

A man who lives in a terrace house near where Kukabu later died added: "I heard police sirens around midnight. I saw there was a taxi car here and there was blood over it and the person was on the floor, collapsed. The police were here by then and they were giving him chest compressions. The police did their best; they did it for about a good half an hour."

Other neighbours said Kukabu's inconsolable family placed flowers at the spot where he had died. A photograph of the teenager was also attached to a nearby tree.

In another incident, Sebastian Zon, 27, was found with a stab wound at a flat in Hackney.

Challenged by Creasy at prime minister's questions on Wednesday, Rishi Sunak said that knife and serious youth violence had fallen in recent years.

According to figures from the Office for National Statistics, there has been a dip. Knife crime in England and Wales fell by 9% in January to December 2022 compared with April 2019 to March 2020. Hospital admissions in England and Wales for people aged 24 and under due to assault by a sharp object fell by 10% in 2022 compared with 2021. But Sunak acknowledged the government had to do everything it could to tackle youth violence.

On Thursday, a 16-year-old appeared at the Old Bailey charged with Renell's murder. Four people have been charged with Kukabu's murder, three of them teenagers. A 52-year-old man was charged with the murder of Zon.





◀ On the same day as Renell's death, Sebastian Zon, 27 (far left), was found dead with a stab wound at a flat in Hackney, and Jordan Kukabu, 18, was stabbed to death in Dagenham as police were called to reports of men armed with machetes

*'No family should have to deal with the pain of losing a child, let alone to do so at the hands of another – yet across the country many are'*

**Stella Creasy**
*Walthamstow MP*

Review

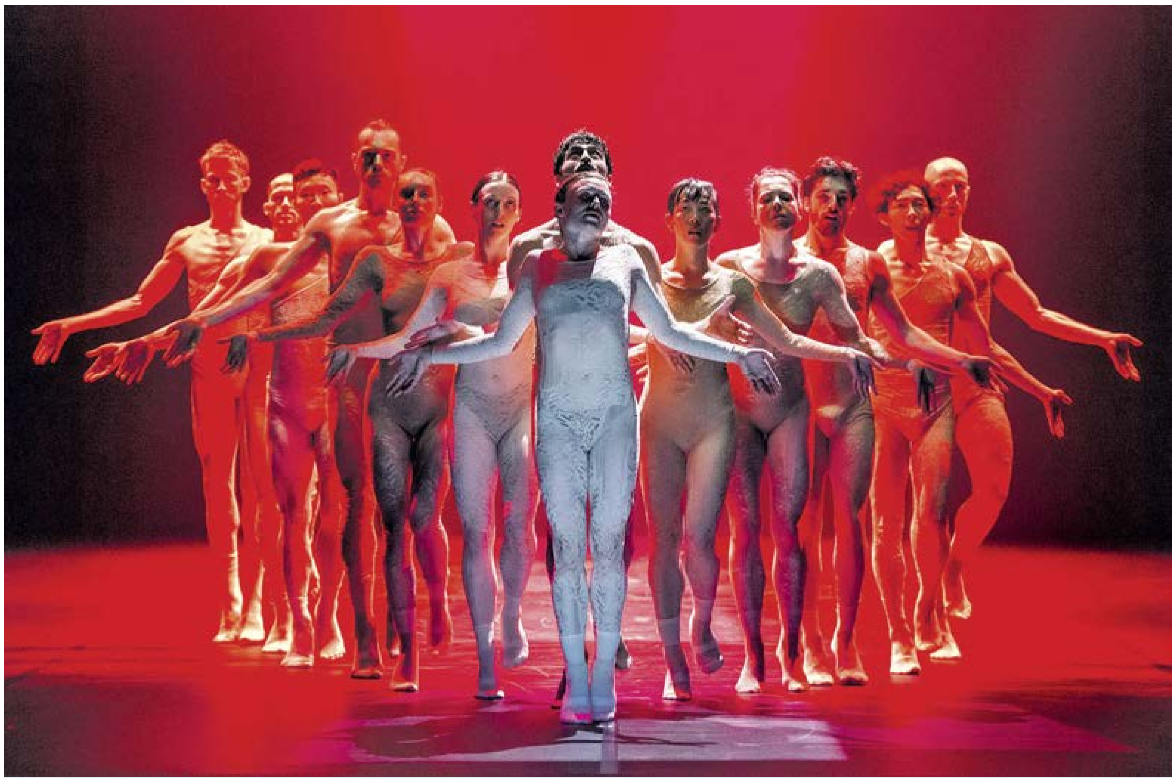
# A sensual, unsettling world

**Skid/Saaba**
*Sadler's Wells, London*
★★★☆☆

**Lyndsey Winship**

The last time Sweden's GöteborgsOperans Danskompani performed at Sadler's Wells, in Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's Icon, they had three and a half tonnes of clay on stage with them, so this bold, cool and accomplished company are not afraid of a statement prop. This time it's a dancefloor inclined at 34 degrees in Damien Jalet's Skid. That's a pretty steep slope, with graceful scuff marks on its white surface like fissures in a sheet of ice. A body emerges over the top and cedes to gravity, very slowly sliding, through a thick, swelling wall of sound by the experimental electronic artist Christian Fennesz and the Japanese composer Marihiko Hara.

Skid is an exercise in what can be done in this particular inhospitable terrain. Speed gradually increases, dancers start to tumble more intentionally and slide through each other's legs. Then there's the upward climb, a crouching march, the squeak of rubber soles. We even get a naked body suspended on the wall in a kind of amniotic sac (or trapped in a pair of tan tights, if you're being less poetic about it). The idea of struggling against or surrendering to natural forces is a strong concept, but that drama doesn't particularly materialise.



*The dancers take on androgynous, alien-like forms in Saaba, choreographed by Sharon Eyal*
PHOTOGRAPH: TRISTRAM KENTON

These versatile dancers surrender completely to the world of the Israeli choreographer Sharon Eyal in Saaba. Her style is hugely distinctive, the dancers on demi-pointe as if wearing invisible heels, forcing the exaggerated curves of the body like a catwalk caricature of femininity except this is entirely androgynous, dressed in nude bodysuits by the Dior designer Maria Grazia Chiuri.

It's a weird, sensual, unsettling world. Often Eyal's dance is soundtracked by dark, pummelling club music; this one starts with something more housey and fun. If you've ever lost yourself on a dancefloor, you'll get the feeling of being swallowed by the tyranny of the beat. And yet there's no abandon here; it's tightly controlled, with something almost courtly about the dancers' small, mannered movements.

This is dance that makes you marvel, at human bodies that seem like alien forms. It's dance as a drug, that can feel intoxicating or numbing, and never quite as potent as the first time you experience it.

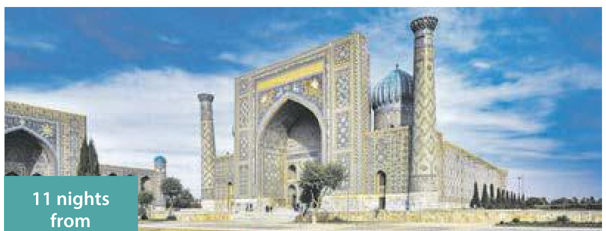
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▲ Phoebe Waller-Bridge and Harrison Ford, as Indiana Jones, in Cannes' 'blockbuster spot' PHOTOGRAPH: AP

▼ Robert De Niro, left, and Leonardo DiCaprio star in Martin Scorsese's Killers of the Flower Moon
PHOTOGRAPH: MELINDA SUE GORDON



# Indiana Jones among elder statesmen set to descend on Cannes

**Catherine Shoard**

Indiana Jones is not the only octogenarian swinging triumphantly back to Cannes this year - though thanks to de-ageing technology, he may be the most fresh-faced.

Harrison Ford's archaeologist takes the coveted "blockbuster spot" in the 2023 edition of the festival, which begins on Tuesday. Last year, that honour went to another returning hero: Tom Cruise, with Top Gun: Maverick, which went on to dominate the box office and score multiple Oscar nominations.

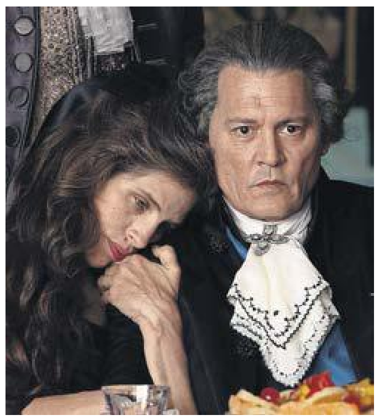
Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny is a fifth and final outing for the character, who comes out of retirement to help his goddaughter, played by Phoebe Waller-Bridge, track down a treasure that Nazis seek to reset the outcome of the second world war.

The trailer shows Ford, now 80, outpacing a subway train on a horse, driving a tuk-tuk off a cliff and leaping from planes - sometimes with wrinkles digitally smoothed to restore him to his 30-year-old self.

The competition lineup is dominated by a similar demographic - though most are behind the camera. The most eagerly-anticipated premiere is Killers of the Flower Moon, Martin Scorsese's true-crime drama starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Robert De Niro and Lily Gladstone, about a series of murders of Native Americans in the 1920s.

Scorsese, 80, will face off against Ken Loach, 86, whose latest film, The Old Oak, unfolds in a former mining town in north-east England, where the landlord of the last remaining pub strikes up a friendship with Syrian refugees recently homed in the area.

Other contenders for this year's Palme d'Or include Croisette favourites Wim Wenders, 77, Nanni Moretti, 69, Aki Kaurismäki, 66, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, 64, and Hirokazu Kore-eda, 60.



▲ Maïwenn and Johnny Depp in the opening film, Jeanne du Barry

Todd Haynes, 62, whose Carol wowed audiences in 2015, presents May December, in which Natalie Portman quizzes Julianne Moore about her marriage to a much-younger man, while Jonathan Glazer, 58, is back with his first feature since 2013's Under the Skin: an adaptation of Martin Amis's The Zone of Interest, about the affair between a Nazi officer and the wife of the commandant of Auschwitz.

Following criticism over poor representation for female directors, this year Cannes debuts an unprecedented number of films in competition directed by women. One of the six is Jeanne du Barry, the opening-night film, directed by and starring Maïwenn as the mistress of Louis XV, played by Johnny Depp.

Such a prominent platform for the film raised eyebrows because of Depp's recent court cases - and because a complaint of assault was recently brought against Maïwenn by Edwy Plenel, the editor of a French investigative magazine, who alleged she attacked him in a Paris restaurant.

Both issues were dismissed by the Cannes general delegate Thierry Frémaux, who said Jeanne du Barry was not "a controversial choice" as the opener, adding: "If Johnny Depp had been banned from working it would have been different, but that's not the case. I think he won the legal case."

Depp emerged largely victorious from a trial between himself and his former wife Amber Heard, in which both made allegations of defamation against the other. Depp was successful on three counts and awarded more than $10m (£8m) in damages, while Heard was successful on one, and awarded $2m.

Earlier this week, it was announced Al Pacino had signed on to star in a biopic of the artist Modigliani, which Depp is directing.

The 76th Cannes film festival runs between 16 and 27 May.

## Three women to watch as they celebrate festival 'firsts'

The Old Oak calls time on one career and toasts the start of another. The veteran director Ken Loach claims it is the last film that he'll make, whereas for **Ebla Mari**, 25 - a theatre teacher from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights - it's a glorious springboard or a bizarre adventure. "I don't see my career as a straight line," she said. "Making the film has been the most amazing thing. But now I'm back to being a theatre teacher and I love it. So I'm OK with whatever happens next in my life."

Loach's drama centres on a failing pub in County Durham that becomes a hub for Syrian refugees. Mari co-stars as Yara, the unofficial ambassador for a displaced community, although her own background is different. "I was the only actor in the cast,"



▲ Ebla Mari stars in The Old Oak

she said. "And I felt very guilty because I'm not a refugee - I'm more privileged than that. I've never been to Syria. I have family there I've never seen. The Golan Heights is occupied, but at least I have a homeland."

**Molly Manning Walker**, 29, cut her teeth as a cinematographer as well as working on high-profile adverts (Dior, Nike, NHS, Gucci with Harry Styles) and music videos (A$AP Rocky, FKA twigs).

She has made two shorts - but although one was selected at Cannes in 2020, the pandemic meant she's "never actually seen a film I've made with an audience".

Manning Walker's debut feature, How to Have Sex, premieres in the Directors' Fortnight sidebar.

It is the story of three teenage girls on a week's hedonistic summer holiday in a cheap resort in Crete. The film's plot, as well as the buzz that's built around it,



▲ Molly Manning Walker



▲ Director Amanda Nell Eu

have led many to bill its director as "the next Charlotte Wells". The comparison is flattering, said Manning Walker, but also "quite upsetting. There's a lot of film-makers that get bracketed together and I wonder if that would happen to men. It feels like you can only have one young female successful director."

**Amanda Nell Eu** is the first Malaysian woman with a film at Cannes. Her debut is an original, ferocious and sometimes very funny fairytale called Tiger Stripes. Set in a small rural community, it focuses on 12-year-old Zaffan, the first of her friends to hit puberty - and who changes in a more dramatic way than most.

Inspired by Mean Girls, as well as the Japanese 70s comedy horror Hausu and big-cat themed Malaysian folklore, Tiger Stripes is being shown in the Critics' Week sidebar - as was Julia Ducournau's body-horror Raw in 2016.

Born in Kuala Lumpur, Eu, 37, spent her teenage and university years in the UK, before returning to Malaysia at 27 - which, she said, made her feel an outsider in both countries. Tiger Stripes taps into this identity crisis and explores a "fear of the female body" she feels is on the rise around the world.
**Catherine Shoard and Xan Brooks**

# Eyewitnessed
# Pictures of the week

▶ *E Jean Carroll arriving at the New York court where a jury found Donald Trump liable for sexually abusing and defaming the columnist*
BRENDAN MCDERMID/ REUTERS








▲ *A threatening storm looms over a rapeseed field at Brading Down on the Isle of Wight*
JAMIE RUSSELL/ ISLAND VISIONS/BNPS






◀ *The Golden State Warriors and Los Angeles Lakers fight for possession during a playoff in San Francisco*
GODOFREDO A VÁSQUEZ/AP



◀ Queen Camilla and King Charles greet crowds from the Buckingham Palace balcony after the coronation
PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS JACKSON/ BUCKINGHAM PALACE



▲ Congolese people in Goma pay tribute to the victims of deadly rains that devastated riverside villages in South Kivu province
REUTERS



▲ People cross the Rio Grande from Mexico into the US on an inflatable mattress before a change to US migration rules
FERNANDO LLANO/AP



◀ Beyoncé starts her world tour in Stockholm with what the Guardian called a 'dizzying concert dripping with sci-fi disco, sex and black pride'
KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY




▼ *A demonstration in London's Chinatown in 2021 against Beijing's security crackdown in Hong Kong*
PHOTOGRAPH: MAY JAMES

# 'This has been a disaster'

# Hongkongers fear deportation after years in UK asylum limbo

**Amy Hawkins**
**May James**

In March 2021, less than one month after his 18th birthday, Lawson, who does not want to reveal his full name, made a decision that would change the course of his life in Hong Kong for ever.

The previous year, Lawson, like thousands of other Hongkongers, had taken to the streets to participate in pro-democracy protests against the influence of the Chinese Communist party. In November 2019, he said he had been arrested for rioting before being released without charge.

In June 2020, Beijing declared victory over the protesters with the imposition of a draconian national security law. By January 2021, the police had arrested dozens of pro-democracy activists and protesters who faced charges which could carry a life sentence.

Lawson saw the writing on the wall, and a friend bought him a plane ticket to London. But his trauma continues. He is now one of a growing number of Hongkongers left in limbo in the UK, fearing deportation in an asylum system where the average wait for a decision is more than a year.

As of December 2022, there were 160 Hongkongers in the UK awaiting decisions on their asylum applications, more than double the number in December 2020. And 13 Hongkongers were either deported or left the UK voluntarily after being rejected for asylum in 2020 and 2021.

In early 2021, Dominic Raab, then the UK's foreign secretary, said Hong Kong's national security law breached international law, and that the UK was opening its doors to those who wanted to flee.

The UK offer was this: anyone with British national (overseas) (BNO) status, and their dependants, could come to live, study and work in the UK. Within a year of the scheme being launched, there were more than 100,000 applications. By December 2022, 105,200 had arrived, one of the biggest waves of non-EU migration to the UK in postwar history.

Lawson, along with more than 100 other Hongkongers now fearing deportation from the UK, was not among that historic cohort. The BNO immigration route was open to anyone born before 1 July 1997, when Hong Kong was ceded to Chinese rule, who had registered for BNO status, along with their partner or spouse and eligible dependants. That excluded many young people such as Lawson, unless they came with a BNO parent (the scheme was expanded in November 2022).



◀ *A protest in Kingston, London, against political oppression in Hong Kong in 2022*
PHOTOGRAPH: MAY JAMES




▲ *A Hong Kong asylum seeker at an immigration reporting centre*

Lawson's parents had not applied for BNO status, so he joined a smaller and more vulnerable group - asylum seeker. "I just wanted to stay [in the UK] and escape the persecution," he says. But two years later, living in asylum-seekers' hotel accommodation, he says that his time in the UK has been "a disaster" as he continues to be left in limbo, not knowing whether he will be deported or granted asylum.

Although many exiled Hongkongers see themselves as political refugees, very few choose to claim asylum. It is a last resort after the BNO route or getting a job or student visa. Between 2020 and 2022, of 184,916 asylum applications to the UK, only 259 came from Hongkongers.

Since the start of the BNO scheme, the refusal rate for applicants has started to creep up, from 0.5% in the first quarter of 2021 to 3% by the end of 2022. If those rejected opt to apply for asylum, they can expect to wait more than six months for a decision, with a refusal rate for Hongkongers of about 15%.

> **'Not only for Hong Kong people, the entire system [for refugees] is far too unsafe'**
>
> **Lawson**
> *Asylum seeker*

When Ivan Yim arrived in London in November 2020, aged 18, from Hong Kong, where he says he had been arrested and tortured the year before, he was unable to answer basic questions about his travel plans. He was denied entry to the UK so he claimed asylum. After waiting for 15 hours in an airport detention centre, he was picked up by Hongkongers who had been notified of his presence.

Although the BNO scheme is "unusual in how liberal it is", it can still be "prohibitively expensive" for some, says Peter Walsh, a senior researcher at the Migration Observatory, based at the University of Oxford. A single applicant must have at least £5,370 to cover the application fee, the NHS healthcare surcharge and the minimum savings threshold.

Community groups have sprung into action to help both asylum seekers and BNOs with no immediate accommodation. "Safe houses" are provided by fellow Hongkongers or volunteer host families offer rooms. Though often more welcoming than official asylum hostels, the relationship between the asylum seekers and the volunteer hosts can be tense.

The BNO scheme is a "more stable way to escape" from Hong Kong, says Lucas Yue, an outreach officer at Project Haven, run by Hongkongers in Britain. The challenge for asylum seekers can be in providing evidence that they fear political persecution because they have often deliberately deleted any online traces such as photos of themselves at demonstrations.

Nathan Law, an exiled activist who was granted asylum in the UK in 2021, said that the experience of BNOs and asylum seekers was "drastically different" and that the "maltreatment of asylum seekers should be exposed and tackled".

A Home Office spokesperson said: "The unprecedented Hong Kong BN(O) visa route is a British success story with more than 153,700 visas granted by the end of December 2022. In November 2022, we expanded the route to allow young Hongkongers born since 1 July 1997 and with at least one parent with British national (overseas) status to apply independently of their parents."

Tens of thousands of Hongkongers have found a haven in the UK thanks to the BNO scheme. But for refugees such as Lawson and Ivan, it is a different story. "I came here to seek safety," says Ivan. "But, not only for Hong Kong people, the entire system [for refugees] is far too unsafe."

Emma Brockes
New York diary



# Parenting is always full of surprises – especially if you are pushing 80

## Monday

It is not a bank holiday in the US, but for those of us who observed the coronation on Saturday Monday is still very much a day of recovery, not least because in our time zones it all started before dawn. Like the British reluctance to watch US coverage of football matches, no one's first choice for the coronation was the American networks. Savannah Guthrie in London for NBC News wore a lace-effect top that – nothing like a royal event to flush out one's most unacceptable opinions – I thought was frankly inappropriate, and the NBC correspondents ran around with huge grins (also inappropriate). Needs must, however, and as it became clear that the BBC, tugging its forelock practically out by the roots, was going to skimp on shots of Prince Harry, it was necessary to switch channels.

The American broadcasters didn't suffer the same squeamishness. "They've gone in hard on Harry and the Brooksbanks, look," said my friend Tiff, whom I'm compelled to keep an open call with during world events as she files overnight to the Australian papers. "Now they've got it on Andrew; NBC just flagrantly chasing the losers, here." On the BBC, meanwhile: some tasteful shots of the second regiment of the Welsh Guards.

There were coronation celebrations in New York, where the British Consulate had, rather optimistically, rented a venue and sent out invitations to an event starting at 5.45am and which by 8am, one imagined, consisted of a couple of people from the chamber of commerce and a hack tanked up on buck's fizz. Not a single American I know watched it, which is a shame, because it was lovely.

We speculated on what was helping Camilla through the day; admired Anne looking gloriously cranky on her horse; and cheered for a regiment of Australian soldiers.

"I have to remind you that your people sent us out first in world war one to be slaughtered," said Tiff. "Mum could tell you the names of the generals who did it."

"And yet, here you are."

"Well, we're a beaten down people."

It was hard not to feel cheerful, and also happy to be in sunny New York, not rain-soaked London – though some of the deeper mysteries of the event didn't travel. "Who's that with the sword?" said my Australian friend, a question which, in the moment, it was impossible fully to answer.

PHOTOGRAPHS: DANIEL LEAL/AP; ANDY RAIN/EPA

*Not so upset that we stood firm on US chlorinated chicken now, are you?!*



## Tuesday

The New York Times drops a huge profile of Elizabeth Holmes in which the former CEO and convicted fraudster unveils what appears to be her latest evolution. Gone is the black turtle neck and deep voice – which Holmes claims, possibly with a pinch of truth, was a response to Silicon Valley not taking her seriously – to be replaced by soft pastels, scenes of domestic life and the diminutive "Liz." Holmes hasn't given a media interview since 2016, and lines from the piece such as, "William enjoys playing in the sand, 'The Little Blue Truck', dumplings and, like his mom, already speaks some Mandarin," is a reminder that it is usually unwise to do so.

There were other, barbed observations. Holmes has been spending her time while she awaits the start of her 11-year prison sentence volunteering for a rape crisis hotline, something that she shares with the reporter, Amy Chozick, as Chozick writes, before "I'd hardly sat down".

What remains odd about Holmes is not, as the reporter writes, that she seems so "normal" these days, but how equal in contrivance the new incarnation seems to the old. Holmes might have Googled "good impression + jury + woman" and studiously worked her way through the results, with the slightly blank expression of someone also implementing the data on how "regular people" behave. In a blockbuster moment in the article a friend of Holmes praises her to the skies, then requests anonymity to caution Chozick "not to believe everything Ms Holmes says". It seems in the context like something of an understatement.

*I know it's hard, but try to aim for the target, not the photographer*



## Wednesday

I don't want to skip over the jubilation of a jury finding Trump liable for sexual abuse and defamation on Tuesday, and awarding his accuser, E Jean Carroll, $5m in damages. The resonance of that finding will play out in the 2024 presidential election and Carroll, all smiles outside the court in New York, has done a profound and meaningful thing. But the shambles of Wednesday night's CNN town hall with Trump adds a revealing and depressing coda. Trump's performance on Wednesday and the response of a crowd that, bizarrely, CNN packed with his supporters, made visible something that has tended only to be hinted at: it's less that Trump's followers have blind faith in his innocence, than that they take delight in the shamelessness of his guilt. Quite apart from the moment when he appeared to re-defame Carroll, watching him slouch and gurn his way through the event left me feeling "angry in my body", as my eight-year-old puts it, and fervently wishing that one – any – of the news networks would put someone up against him who, rather than limply and fruitlessly correcting his false statements, is willing to tell him, "you're lying".

## Thursday

It's not polite to comment on how old people are when they have their children, but an exception can be made in the case of good old Robert de Niro, who has had his seventh child at 79, a year shy of the Charlie Chaplin benchmark for men doing things with total impunity that in women trigger horrified recoil. Is it gross? To have a baby that old? I mean it wouldn't seem to be ideal. De Niro, whose eldest child is 51 and who had the child before this one at the relatively youthful age of 68, is enjoying a lot of lively coverage. Despite his advanced age, most of the commentary around the new baby falls along the chuckly "is he a cool dad?" line rather than, say, might he consider taking this quick Am I A Narcissist online quiz or talking to a licensed professional about family planning?

## Friday

If De Niro can wrap his head around parenting children from both Gen X and Gen Z – though in the case of the new baby, "parent" as an active verb may be generous; one imagines De Niro doing some light emeritus parenting at most – I should be able to reconcile myself to the priorities of my two. The coronation continues to be a topic of discussion all week, but I can't shed one particular, chilling memory.

With attention waning by the time King Charles III appeared on the balcony, my two were suddenly yanked awake by an exciting visual: the Red Arrows flying over Buckingham Palace, coloured smoke streaming behind the nine planes while my children looked on with real interest. Too many hours spent on TikTok can come out in peculiar, demoralising ways. "Is it a gender reveal?!" said one.

# 'I never knew cancer would give me so much,' says Tracey Emin

Angela Giuffrida
*Rome*

Tracey Emin has spoken about her recovery from cancer as the British artist opened a new exhibition in Rome, recalling her last visit to the Italian capital "when I was dying, but didn't know it".

Fifteen artworks completed by Emin since she was given the all-clear from bladder cancer in 2021 are being displayed at the Galleria Lorcan O'Neill. You Should Have Saved Me is described as a testament "to the healing power of art".

Her last show at the same gallery was in 2019, before her cancer diagnosis. "The last time I was here, someone asked a question and my answer was: 'I would just like to die,'" she said. "Because what I didn't realise at the time was that I really was dying. I nearly didn't make the opening; I felt terrible and someone said: 'Oh, she's been drinking.' But I really hadn't … I was really seriously ill."

Emin, 59, was unable to paint during her illness, but sprang back with a burst of energy that she put into the series of acrylic on canvas paintings, which reflect her volcano of emotions – be it the rage felt while painting The Crucifixion or when looking back at her "fucked-up childhood" with You Should Have Saved Me.

She said she wanted people to feel something when they saw her work. "Or I want them to feel something about themselves – that's the most important thing. I don't want people to say: 'Oh, what a beautiful painting.' I want them to say: 'Fuck, that's me.'"

The Crucifixion is also a reflection on Emin's sacrifices. "I think, at this point in my life, that I've sacrificed quite a lot to be here," she said. "I sacrificed my bladder, part of my vagina, a number of my body parts … I don't have children, I'm not married, I sacrificed all those things to be an artist. But no matter what situation I've been in or how desperate or scared I've been, art has saved me."




▲ *Emin has 15 artworks on show at Rome's Galleria Lorcan O'Neill*

Emin created the works at her studios in London and Margate, where she recently opened her new art school.

She said she was happier now than before she had cancer. "I have all this new work, all this new life, all this new energy and focus that I never had before. I never knew cancer would give me so much … everything is now more beautiful, kinder, better than it was before. I just had to lose a few things to get to that point."

# Environment



## 'It is a matter of life for us' One man's fight to help the world's waste pickers

Sandra Laville

As a child, John Chweya and his friends scrambled over the mountain of stinking waste at Kachok dump, using a magnet to pull out metal scraps and earn a living.

Over the years since, global companies such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Nestlé have increased plastic production by millions of metric tonnes, and plastic bottles have replaced metal as the source of income for those who pick through the garbage in Kisumu, the third largest city in Kenya.

Today in the multimillion-pound plastic industry, it is the people who live and work on rubbish mountains in Africa and across the world who are the invisible backbone of plastic recycling and enable multinational companies to meet their targets to reduce its use.

According to the UN environmental assembly, 60% of the plastic recycled across the world is collected by waste pickers like Chweya. But they are ghost workers; unrecognised, unprotected and discriminated against. With no ability to access healthcare, they succumb to infections, lung diseases and cancer from living amongst toxic waste, inhaling smoke from burning plastic and scratching a living in some of the worst conditions possible.

"There were a lot of children my age at the dump when I started going there. Some of them were sleeping there, in makeshift houses they had built," said Chweya.

"Most of those friends of mine from the dump died, some were killed in accidents, and some died from sickness. I remember all their names."

Chweya has carried those names on an incredible journey over 20 years which has taken him from a childhood on the dump to the discussion rooms of the UN, driven by a passion to ensure the rights of waste pickers across the world are put front and centre of the global treaty to fight plastic pollution.

This month in Paris, Chweya will sit with representatives of world leaders as the gritty details of the UN treaty to tackle plastic pollution are hammered out.

Chweya, who leads the waste pickers' association of Kenya, has been instrumental in pushing countries to recognise the world's 20 million workers in his industry. He wants justice for them, access to healthcare, a proper income and better working conditions to be included in the treaty. "As someone who has experienced the deep inequalities and social injustices that waste pickers suffer - not just in Kenya, but across the world - being part of this is a very historic moment," said Chweya.

"We have been the backbone of collection and recycling systems in the world, and one of the things I know for sure is that the treaty must be for the people who have been on frontline of fighting this global problem of plastic pollution.

"It is a matter of life for us. We



▲ *A woman lugs a sack of materials sorted from a waste dump in Nairobi*

**Going wild**
**How to forage responsibly**
*Page 37*





◀ *A truckload of waste is dumped near workers hunting for plastic at the Kasese dump in Kisumu, Kenya*
PHOTOGRAPHS: EDWIN NDEKE/THE GUARDIAN

▲ *John Chweya, the waste pickers' association chair, began scavenging at the dump as a child and is taking his fight for pickers' rights to the UN*

have already died and are still dying, so I want to make sure that the role and contribution of waste pickers is not taken for granted."

Richard Gower, senior associate for economics and policy, at the international organisation Tearfund, which provides advocacy support to Chweya, said: "When the treaty was first discussed, most people thought plastic pollution was an environmental problem, rather than a human problem.

"There is increasing recognition now of the human problem; the impact on the 20 million people involved in collecting plastic from streets and dumps, and the two billion people in the world who do not have regular bin collections, which results in huge amounts of plastic being dumped and the health impacts of that pollution."

In the years Chweya has worked as a waste picker, he has encountered death and discrimination every day.

"I had to start picking because my family's life changed overnight when there was a fire at the market where my mum sold the second-hand clothes which were our main income," he said.

"From then on every single one of us had to go out and try and earn money. So I started looking for metals to sell from the waste in the streets and the dump. I used a magnet tied to a rope, and hung it over the rubbish to attract the metal. For each kilogram of metal I sold to a dealer I would get 5 Kenyan shillings - that is like in dollars, 0.03."

For a while Chweya was able to attend primary school, where the parents of his friends shunned him. "They did not let their children play with me. They called us Thokora, which is a Swahili word for someone who eats a bin," he said.

Chweya, who was better educated than most of his contemporaries at the dump, began to organise his friends in Kisumu. And with organisation came more power, and a stronger voice which he used to challenge the local authorities on their policies.

"I started to approach the county government and talk to them about the inequalities we suffered," he said. "We were doing the job that the municipal government was supposed to be doing, but no one was engaging with us. They saw us as illiterate and uneducated and for a very long time they did not understand the livelihoods of waste pickers.

"It was not until we started to engage with them that they started to see us properly."

Chweya began to build local co-operatives of waste pickers. Today the Kenyan waste pickers' association represents 36,000 collectors. In Kisumu he is part of a group who bargain collectively and pool their earnings. "We are collecting more plastic and because we have a stronger voice now, we are negotiating directly with agents and sometimes with the recycling companies," he said.

Kachok was closed last year after four decades of operation. But similar waste tips still exist in Kenya and across the world, and as he travels across the country to speak to workers, Chweya still encounters death and illness on a daily basis.

"The health needs of waste pickers are one of my top priorities," said Chweya, who recently raised money to supply 600 pairs of gumboots and gloves for his colleagues.

"I see my colleagues dying, I see them with symptoms of cancer, I see mysterious diseases developing in them, I see lives just disappearing.

"But at the top of this system there are very wealthy companies, big drinks companies and major waste companies, who make a lot of money. Their employees enjoy health insurance, good salaries, a normal life, but for those of us who are doing the job of collecting the plastic waste, we cannot access any of those privileges."

# Right to roam: access to nature in England is far from equal, study finds

**Helena Horton**
*Environment reporter*

People have no right to roam at all in 92 constituencies across England, new data shows, as campaigners call for an outdoor access code to link people to nature.

Next week, MPs will debate the "right to roam", namely the ability to legally and responsibly walk through the countryside, leaving no trace behind. Currently, only 8% of England has this designation, which covers coastal paths, mountains and moorland.

The environmental campaigner Guy Shrubsole and the Right to Roam campaign have compiled the data and ranked the constituencies with the most - and least - free access in their area.

Conservative constituencies tended to have more free access than Labour ones. The prime minister Rishi Sunak's constituency of Richmond in Yorkshire currently ranks fourth out of the 533 English seats in terms of the area of land you can freely roam over. Labour leader Keir Starmer's inner-city constituency of Holborn and St Pancras ranks 321st.

Of the 100 constituencies with most access, 91 are currently Tory, seven are Labour and two are Lib Dem. Of the 100 constituencies with least access, 70 are Labour, 29 are Tory, and one is Lib Dem.

Penrith and the Border, a Conservative constituency currently held by Neil Hudson, has the widest right to roam, with 111,370 hectares (275,202 acres) available. This is followed by Hexham, held by fellow Tory Guy Opperman, with 97,495 hectares, and then Tory MP Julian Smith's constituency of Skipton and Ripon, with 76,028 hectares.

There are 117 constituencies in England with less than one hectare of land with "right to roam" access.

Caroline Lucas, the Green MP for Brighton Pavilion, is calling for free access across woodlands and the green belt, which would free up land for walks in the countryside around urban areas.

Access to nature is unequally distributed across England. Seventy two percent of the Peak District is access land, compared with just 0.6% of Kent. Until recently, Dartmoor was the only place in England and Wales where the public had a right to wild camp - but in January that right was successfully challenged in a court case brought by a local landowner.

Campaigners are calling for something more wide-ranging than Lucas's right to roam bill; they point out that there has been a successful approach modelled by Scotland for the past 20 years. This established public rights of responsible access to most land and water in Scotland, subject to a set of exceptions - such as private dwellings and gardens, school playing fields, military and construction sites, and land on which crops are growing. Its provisions include a broad range of recreational activities, including walking and camping.

Shrubsole said: "The public's right to access nature in England is hugely unequal. Not only does our right to roam cover just 8% of the country, much of this is remote from where most people live; there are 92 constituencies in England with no right to roam at all. The best way to solve this is for England to follow Scotland's lead and legislate for a new right of responsible access covering the majority of land and water, with sensible exceptions …

"A new Right to Roam Act for England should be backed by a fresh outdoor access code outlining the responsibilities of both public and landowners. It's worked in Scotland."

**Free spaces**
**Constituency guide**

**Top 10 constituencies with most 'right to roam' areas (in hectares)**

**Penrith and the Border** 111,370
Neil Hudson, Conservative
**Hexham** 97,495
Guy Opperman, Conservative
**Skipton and Ripon** 76,028
Julian Smith, Conservative
**Richmond (Yorks)** 62,494
Rishi Sunak, Conservative
**Copeland** 54,787
Trudy Harrison, Conservative
**Westmorland and Lonsdale**
48,414, Tim Farron,
Liberal Democrat
**Berwick-upon-Tweed**
43,663 - Anne-Marie Trevelyan,
Conservative
**Bishop Auckland**
34,918, Dehenna Davison,
Conservative
**Torridge and West Devon**
30,295, Geoffrey Cox,
Conservative
**North West Durham** 26,599
Richard Holden, Conservative

> *'The best way to solve this is to legislate for a right of access to the majority of land'*
>
> **Guy Shrubsole**
> *Right to Roam campaign*



◀ *The Lake District constituency of Penrith and the Border, which includes Ullswater lake, has the most 'right to roam' access in England*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOE DUNCKLEY/GETTY/ISTOCKPHOTO

# CAN EATING IN BE AS GOOD AS DINING OUT?

We think so. Our No.1 pizzas are made with hand-stretched sourdough and wood fired, so you get pizzeria flavour right at home.




Waitrose No.1 Roasted Vegetable & Pesto Sourdough Pizza. Selected stores. Subject to availability. Minimum online spend and delivery charges apply.



▲ *Wild garlic, popular with foragers, in a field on Worthy Farm, Somerset, the site of the Glastonbury festival*
PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID LEVENE/THE GUARDIAN

# Taken from the wild: foragers are harvesting too much food from nature, experts warn

**Helena Horton**
*Environment reporter*

Foragers for wild garlic and mushrooms have been picking ingredients in protected sites, taking too much and putting wildlife at risk, experts have warned.

The trend of gathering food in the wild has boomed in recent years, with top restaurants serving foraged food, and it can be a healthy and sustainable way for people to get closer to nature.

In spring, restaurant menus are full of foraged goods. Jemima Jones, who runs Wild By Tart in Pimlico, London, goes foraging with her children at the weekends on her estate in Somerset.

She said: "This is a fun activity to do with the kids, going into the woods. Nettles are everywhere and not that many people use them but they are really nutritious – they are higher in iron than spinach and they are sustainable."

Her menu currently contains an abundance of wild flowers and plants. "Right now on the menu we've got wild garlic arancini with cheese, a spring salad which at the bottom … has nettle pesto, and we have a martini that is finished on the top with nettle oil, and we have elderflower fritters on the dessert menu," she said. "We use an edible flower called lady's smock – it's first sort of fruity then it has an amazing wasabi taste. We use borage flowers too."

The Michelin-starred chef Tommy Banks, who runs Roots in York, uses invasive species in his recipes. He said: "The way we forage … is absolutely sustainable and strategic. We only ever handpick what we need for our restaurants across hundreds of acres. Foraging for these types of species, as well as being delicious, help allow the ecosystem to thrive once again."

However, the National Trust has said that people have been picking armfuls of foraged goods in order to sell them commercially, and that this has harmed fragile ecosystems.

Ben McCarthy, head of nature conservation and restoration at the National Trust, said: "If undertaken carefully and only for personal use, foraging can be good fun and help people connect with nature.

"However, excessive foraging, or foraging on protected sites, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSIs], can be detrimental to our precious wildlife and negatively impact delicate ecosystems."

The trust has written a code of conduct for visitors who wish to pick elderflower, nettles, wild garlic or other ingredients in their gardens and nature reserves, asking them only to pick for personal consumption and only what they are sure will be used.

They suggest only taking one in 20 plants, and warn never to pick protected species and not to forage for anything without consent on SSSIs, as well as taking only ingredients that are obviously abundant and common.

Rob Stoneman, the director of landscape recovery for The Wildlife Trusts, said: "Responsible wild foraging is a great reminder for how nature is bountiful and immensely good for us. Don't be afraid to get out in the fresh air to gather wild and nutritious food – it's great for the body but more importantly the soul.

"You must have permission from landowners and know exactly what you're taking as mistakes can be dangerous. Wild foraging is a great way of honing wildlife identification skills."

Despite their enthusiasm for foraging, the trusts have had problems with people taking too much from their reserves, with suspicions some was going to the restaurant trade.

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) has banned people from picking mushrooms on its nature reserves after reports that groups of foragers had been ripping them up on a commercial scale.

Members of the public said they had seen groups walking around Trust reserves in Berkshire such as Snelsmore Common and filling bags with mushrooms. Staff suspected the perpetrators were selling their finds to the restaurant trade.

Roger Stace, BBOWT's land manager for Berkshire, said: "We see this problem every year, but I think it's worsened – we've certainly had more reports. I suspect that is partly down to the cost of living crisis, and I fear commercial foragers are selling stolen fungi to restaurants for money.

"We are lucky to have some incredibly rare fungus species on our nature reserves, and if people aren't trained they could be picking and destroying these rare species."

## What's in season

**Nettles** They are abundant and full of nutrients.

**Wild garlic** The trendy ingredient carpets woodlands.

**Elderflowers** Important for pollinators, so leave more than you take.

**Chickweed** An underrated weed full of vitamins and minerals. Good in salads or turned into pesto.

**Dandelions** Abundant and all parts are edible. Add young leaves to salads, sandwiches or pies. Flowers can be used in risotto or omelettes, for decoration, or to make beer and wine.

**Mallow** Its pretty purple flowers are edible and great for decoration. The leaves are rich in protein, calcium, iron and vitamin C.

## Elderflower: what to do



Elderflowers, above, are commonly found in parks, woods and gardens from mid-May to June. They resemble cow parsley, but grow on trees rather than stalks out of the ground.

Where possible, try to use flowers picked away from polluted roads.

**Elderflower champagne**

- About 10-12 large, clean, freshly picked elderflower heads (ideally they should be gathered in the morning)
- 700g sugar
- 4 tablespoons white wine vinegar
- 2 or 3 lemons, chopped into slices
- 5 litres of water

Sterilise a large bucket or container. Dissolve the sugar in hot water, then make the liquid up to five litres of warmish water (lower than blood temperature).

Mix in everything else.

Leave loosely covered in a cool, dark place for about four or five days. The mixture will become cloudy and bubbles will form on the surface. The fermentation process relies on the natural yeast from the flowers, so if the bubbles are slow to form you can speed it along by adding a pinch of brewing yeast, though this is rarely necessary.

Strain and bottle. Use robust bottles designed to hold carbonated drinks such as tonic water, or glass bottles with a pop-cap – the mixture can become explosive. Sterilise the bottles before use.

Leave for two weeks in a cool dark place for the secondary fermentation before drinking – it will last at least six months or so. Check the pressure on the bottles from time to time and, if the plastic is becoming distorted, release some air. Alcohol content will vary depending on yeast content, sugar content and length of primary fermentation.



# World



## Erdoğan's chief rival accuses Russia of interference in Turkish election

**Ruth Michaelson**
**Deniz Barış Narlı** *Istanbul*

Turkey's leading opposition candidate has accused Russia of election interference days before the country's most consequential vote in a generation.

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu of the Republican People's party (CHP), the chief rival to the incumbent president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, accused Russia of concocting deepfake videos and false material, seemingly a reference to an allegedly fake sex tape of the candidate Muharrem İnce, released a day before he dropped out of the race.

"If you want the continuation of our friendship after 15 May, get your hands off the Turkish state," said Kılıçdaroğlu, adding: "We are still in favour of."

The Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov rejected the claims. "We officially declare: there can be no talk of any interference," he said. "If someone provided Mr Kılıçdaroğlu with such information, they are liars."

Turkish voters will go to the polls tomorrow to cast their ballots for both the president and parliament. Re-electing Erdoğan would provide a mandate for him to further concentrate power around his office, crack down on opponents, and use his position of influence on the world stage to harden his control at home.

Current polling suggests a tight vote in the presidential election. One candidate must secure more than 50% to win outright, or the race will go to a runoff two weeks later.



▲ *The president addresses a crowd in Istanbul* PHOTOGRAPH: ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY

Erdoğan, who previously lashed out at the US ambassador, Jeff Flake, for publicly meeting with Kılıçdaroğlu, has declared: "Turkey will give a message to the west with this election."

His interior minister, Süleyman Soylu, went even further, describing the vote as "a political coup attempt by the west".

The six-party opposition coalition led by Kılıçdaroğlu has campaigned on the promise of reform, and the dismantling of a sprawling system of control that Erdoğan has spent two decades building.

Under Erdoğan's leadership, Turkey transformed into a presidential system supported by a vast patronage network loyal to his Justice and Development party (AKP), rebuffing an attempted military coup in 2016 and often branding his opponents enemies of the state.

Erdoğan has also increased Turkey's footprint overseas and reshaped its economy in his image, overseeing vast infrastructure projects and development but also an economic crisis in which the Turkish lira has halved in value in the past year alone.

**'A bit more time'**
**Ukraine in no rush to launch counterattack**
Page 40

**Stubbed out**
**Portugal looks to limit smoking outdoors**
Page 45





◀ *Supporters of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gathered at an election rally in Istanbul yesterday* PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF J MITCHELL/GETTY

"As we get closer to the vote, I feel excited but also responsible for the fate of 85 million people across Turkey," said Canan Kaftancıoğlu, a leading member of the CHP, currently weathering a ban from politics after a court charged her with insulting Erdoğan.

"I believe this election will set an example, not just for Turkey but for the whole world. For the first time, an authoritarian regime will be taken out by democracy," she said. "If we succeed, it will set an example for other countries struggling for their own democracies."

The possibility of a one-round race with potentially a victor as early as tomorrow increased slightly after İnce dropped out, leaving only the small margin of votes held by the ultranationalist Sinan Oğan of the Victory party to spoil the chances of either candidate reaching the threshold for a runoff.

In the parliamentary elections, polls also suggest Erdoğan's coalition could lose its governing majority, but the opposition must win a majority in parliament and the presidency to ensure they achieve their primary aim of returning Turkey to parliamentary democracy.

For the opposition, their continued survival as well as democracy itself are on the ballot; Erdoğan's coalition partner, Devlet Bahçeli, recently declared the opposition could receive "life sentences or bullets in their bodies". The campaign trail has been pockmarked with violence towards opposition figures with a bullet being thrown inside the CHP's local offices in one town, a day after a group threw stones at supporters and the campaign bus of the leading opposition figure and Istanbul mayor, Ekrem İmamoğlu.

"This is the election that determines whether Erdoğan is considered an elected president with autocratic tendencies who then lost and left power, where the story is one of the resilience of Turkish democracy. Or, is it an election in which after everything he's done … Erdoğan wins again and comes back to do this for another five years," said Nate Schenkkan of Freedom House.

The outcome of the vote for president is expected to depend in part on Kurdish voters, including the sizeable portion now backing Kılıçdaroğlu after the largely Kurdish leftwing Peoples' Democratic party opted not to field a presidential candidate.

The result will also hinge heavily on votes cast within the 11 provinces deeply affected by twin powerful earthquakes that killed more than 50,000 people, levelled infrastructure and displaced millions. The government resisted efforts to allow those registered to vote within the earthquake zone to vote elsewhere, forcing those wishing to cast their ballots to return to areas destroyed by the earthquake on election day.

# 'This will be fateful for me'

## Syrian refugees fear future as candidates talk of return

**Ruth Michaelson**
**Husam Hezaber**

Reclining in a leather chair framed by shelves of colourful shampoo bottles, washing powder and jars of honey, Rakkan Talib surveys the small business he has made his own. The 26-year-old supervised a procession of giggling schoolchildren arriving to buy bread, as they eyed the packets of bubblegum on the counter next to his stack of leather-bound ledgers.

Talib came to the southern Turkish city of Gaziantep in 2014 after fleeing Islamic State's advance on his home town, Deir ez-Zor, determined to transform his fortunes after abandoning his dream of becoming a doctor. He succeeded, working his way up until he bought his corner shop outright two years ago.

"I lost my education, and my future. I lost everything to come here and live in safety and dignity. Now they're talking about restoring relations with Assad and deporting us to Syria," he said, flicking ash from a cigarette. "These election results will be fateful for me, and for all Syrians in Turkey."

An estimated 4 million Syrians live in Turkey and, for many, their relationship with their adopted home has deepened over the past decade despite an increasingly hostile climate. When polled, at least 80% of Turks say they want Syrians to return. This sentiment has grown across the political spectrum in Turkey, amid a rise in anti-immigrant parties and where a broad coalition trying to unseat the Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has attacked him from the right on immigration.

The result has been a tug-of-war between Erdoğan's governing coalition and the nominally social democratic opposition Republican People's party (CHP) over the fate of Turkey's Syrian community. Both parties are openly competing



▲ *People in Gaziantep displaced by February's earthquake receive food*

> ***'We will send all Syrians back to their country within two years at the latest'***
>
> **Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu**
> *Opposition candidate*

to see who can promise to crack down harder on immigration and swiftly restore relations with Assad. When Turkey heads to the polls tomorrow the Syrian community is poised to endure loss, no matter who wins.

The opposition's presidential candidate, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, has been vocal about his desire to deport Syrian refugees, spelling out his plans at every rally. "We will send all Syrians back to their country within two years at the latest," he said.

Anti-refugee sentiment runs high within the CHP despite the party touting its social democratic credentials, and one local branch invited the media to watch as Syrians boarded buses bound for Turkey's southern border. Kılıçdaroğlu's deputy, Onursal Adıgüzel, said: "We are not saying in a racist way that we're going to send people back. With the right policy and with healthy communication with Syria, we want to reconstruct the region again and send Syrians back step by step."

Erdoğan has responded to the CHP's electioneering by pressing to swiftly restore relations with Damascus. Turkey's defence minister and intelligence chief have repeatedly met their Syrian counterparts, the highest-level meetings in more than a decade. The Syrian foreign minister, Faisal Mekdad, told reporters that Ankara would have to pull back its troops from northern Syria for a full rapprochement between the two leaders to be possible.

Still, the possibility of a full reconciliation has been enough for Erdoğan to claim that Syrians based in Turkey are safe to return. Twin earthquakes in February that killed almost 60,000 across southern Turkey and northern Syria and destroyed homes and infrastructure in a strip of land under Turkish control have done little to dissuade Erdoğan, who has boasted of Turkish-built tower blocks in Idlib being ready for returnees.



▲ *Police escort Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan as he arrives at the high court in Islamabad yesterday* PHOTOGRAPH: AAMIR QURESHI/AFP

# Imran Khan given bail as court orders protection from arrest

**Shah Meer Baloch** *Islamabad*
**Hannah Ellis-Petersen** *Delhi*

A court granted bail to Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan yesterday in a corruption case after his arrest ignited deadly protests and a tussle with the military.

The court also ordered his protection from arrest on any other charges until Monday, amid concerns that he would be immediately rearrested upon his release.

Security was tight as Khan appeared at a hearing at Islamabad high court seeking bail in multiple cases. He had been in police custody since Tuesday after being arrested on the premises of the court by almost 100 paramilitary officers.

To the anger of the government, Khan was granted relief on Thursday when the supreme court ruled that the manner of his arrest, on court premises, was illegal, and ordered him to seek bail from the high court. He stayed overnight at a police guesthouse but was no longer a detainee.

Yesterday judges in the Islamabad high court formally granted Khan bail for two weeks in the Al-Qadir trust case, which involves allegations of illegal land transfers. They also granted him bail in three other cases.

Khan was kept in the courtroom until late yesterday evening owing to security concerns after shots were fired outside. He planned to return to his home in Lahore.

Khan and his lawyer had expressed concern that he faced rearrest in relation to some of the dozens of other cases he is facing. "I am 100% concerned that I will be arrested again," Khan told local media on his way into the courtroom. He said that if he was arrested again, the cycle of violence would continue.

Khan's lawyer, Babar Awan, claimed that Lahore and Punjab police were travelling to the Islamabad high court to arrest Khan.

"Why are they then so adamant to arrest Imran? Let me tell you, any attempt to arrest Imran again will be unconstitutional," he told reporters.

The government, led by the prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, accused the supreme court of "hypocrisy" over its verdict and said the leaders of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party were "pushing the country towards destruction".

The interior minister, Rana Sanaullah, said Khan was not safe from arrest despite the directions by the court. "We will try to get his bail nullified," he said. "And if he is given bail in some cases and some cases are still left, we will definitely arrest him."

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the president of the Pakistan Democratic Movement – the political coalition that governs Pakistan under Sharif – accused the supreme court of "protecting terrorism".

Khan has denied all charges against him as politically motivated. His popularity has risen since he was removed from power in April last year. He has since accused the country's powerful military, once his close ally, of orchestrating his downfall, and senior military leaders of attempts to assassinate him.

Speaking in court yesterday, Khan said his battle was not with the whole military establishment but with "one man, the army chief", referring to the newly appointed Gen Asim Munir, with whom Khan had a notoriously fractious relationship while he was prime minister.

The violent protests that erupted across the country this week largely abated after the supreme court ruling, but the army was still present on the streets and an emergency law preventing gatherings was imposed by police in the capital. More than 2,000 people have been arrested, and mobile internet was shut down across the country until it was restored late yesterday.

# ‘We need to wait’

# Kyiv said to be in no rush to start its counterattack

**Luke Harding**
*Kherson*

At a secret location in southern Ukraine, Roman Kostenko watched a drone rise into the sky. It ascended to a height of 100 metres, buzzing above a field of yellow rapeseed. The drone dropped a dummy anti-tank grenade on to a pile of tyres. The test worked. That night Kostenko’s team repeated the exercise over occupied territory. Two bombs fell on a Russian armoured fighting vehicle. It blew up, smoke pluming into the darkness.

Kostenko, a decorated special forces colonel, said his unit had destroyed dozens of Russian military objects, including tanks and howitzer guns. These operations took place every night on “a tactical level”, he said, close to the frontline.

This stretches for 900 miles from the eastern city of Bakhmut, where Ukrainian troops launched a local counterattack this week, to the southern provinces of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson.

There has been intense speculation that Kyiv is about to launch a counteroffensive. On Thursday, Russian military bloggers erroneously reported that it had started. Speaking earlier that day, the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said his forces needed more time. According to Kostenko, Ukraine’s long anticipated push should be viewed as a rolling “spring-summer campaign” against an entrenched and powerful adversary.

Kostenko said the campaign was already unfolding in stages. The first involved the step-by-step elimination of Russia’s military potential, with strikes against logistical targets such as weapons depots and fuel dumps. This had begun, he said. A second stage involved eliminating Russian command and control centres, causing a breakdown of communications with troops in the field. “That’s already happening too, probably,” he said.

“Our army won’t go forward until this preparation work is done. We can’t win if they [the Russians] have large amounts of ammunition and resources.”

He acknowledged that Ukraine was playing a disinformation game about when and where it might strike, with signs that it was working, and that Moscow was beginning to panic.

Kostenko’s comments inject a note of caution into what Ukraine’s army might realistically achieve over the next few months. They raise the prospect that the war could go on through 2023 and into next year. Western observers, by contrast, appear to expect a decisive blow. Their optimism comes after Ukrainian operations last autumn in the north-east and south, which liberated large swathes of territory, including the city of Kherson.

Senior Ukrainian officials have warned against exaggerating the likelihood of a repeat breakthrough. In interviews this week, Zelenskiy said some armoured vehicles promised by the west had yet to arrive, and that Kyiv was not prepared to accept a bad peace deal if the counteroffensive failed or fell short. “We can go forward and be successful. But we’d lose a lot of people. I think that’s unacceptable. So we need to wait. We still need a bit more time,” the president said.

> *‘We can’t win if they have large amounts of ammunition and resources’*
>
> **Roman Kostenko**
> *Ukrainian special forces*

Kostenko led the defence of the southern city of Mykolaiv, and has since worked closely with the drone unit. The unit calls itself Perun, after a pagan god of sky and thunder. It makes its own quadcopters in a workshop, and is engaged in a constant battle of wits with Russian forces, who try to knock out the drones using electronic jamming systems.

According to Ukrainian partisans, spooked Russian soldiers have grown terrified of mysterious nighttime attacks. They have nicknamed the invisible drones Baba Yaga, after the Slavic witch who flies around on a broom.

Ukraine’s counteroffensive plan is classified, known only to Zelenskiy’s commander-in-chief, Gen Valerii Zaluzhnyi, and a few others. There has been speculation that his troops might try to cross the Dnipro River where Moscow has control. But Kostenko said the Russians would spot a buildup of Ukrainian forces and smash them with artillery. “There would be an unacceptable level of casualties,” he said.

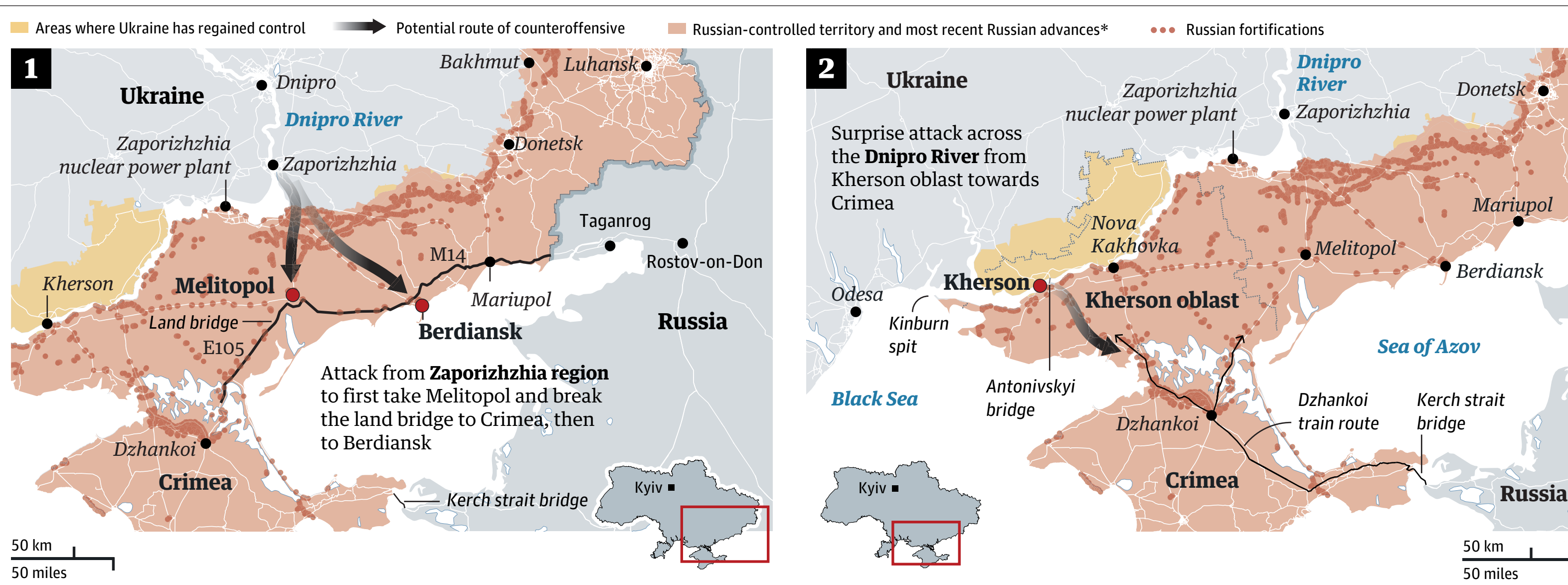
In the meantime, Ukrainian and Russian soldiers were skirmishing on islands in the middle of the river. “It’s a grey zone. Nobody controls them. We fire and they fire,” Kostenko said, adding that both sides struggled to defend positions that were gained and quickly lost. It was impossible to dig trenches because water appeared after only a few feet, he said.



# The options

## Where and how Ukraine might break the long deadlock

**Dan Sabbagh**
*Defence and security editor*




Source: the Institute for the Study of War with AEI’s Critical Threats Project. *Areas ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control. 10pm local time, 9 May 2023. Brady Africk, analysis of satellite

After 15 months of fighting, the war in Ukraine is heading towards its most critical point. Kyiv has assembled a force - 12 brigades and perhaps 60,000 troops strong, if leaked Pentagon papers are to be believed - equipped largely with Nato-standard tanks, armour and artillery, and trained in part in the west.

Now Ukraine has to demonstrate that is has a path to a military victory, that it can push back the Russian invaders. But the question is: where could it attack?

### 1. Break the land bridge and isolate Crimea

The most obvious Ukrainian attack would be from the Zaporizhzhia sector south and south-west towards Melitopol, or possibly south-east towards Berdiansk. The aim would be to cut the road supply links running close to the coast, but maps of Russian fortifications show a relatively dense double line of trenches and positions surrounding the strategically important city of Tokmak.

Ukraine would like to render Russia’s long occupation of Crimea untenable, which could be achieved if the Kerch Bridge, which connects the peninsula to Russia proper, can be blown again - perhaps with the help of newly acquired Storm Shadow long-range cruise missiles that could also strike at the important logistics hub of Dzhankoi.

But Ukraine knows Russia will fight hard for Crimea, even from a distance, so there may well be advantages to attacking elsewhere.

### 2. Over the Dnipro River into occupied Kherson

Ukraine’s advantage, says Ed Arnold from the defence thinktank Rusi, is that it has choices of counterattack locations.

A riskier strategy would be to try to launch an amphibious operation across the Dnipro River farther west, where there are fewer but still plenty of fortifications. Britain expanded its programme of training for Ukrainian soldiers in February to encompass marines, and there have been some reports of marines battling to establish bridgeheads in the islands of the Dnipro delta, west of Oleshky.

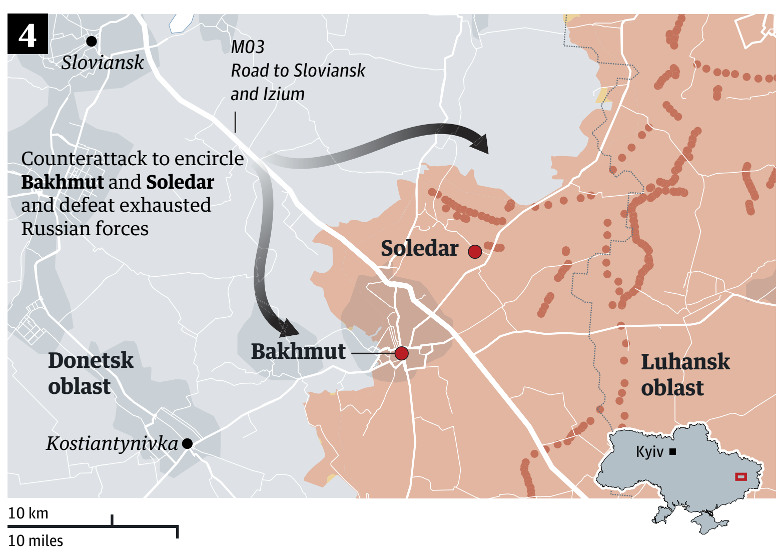
A significant attack would be “high risk, high reward”, says Arnold. He argues it is not obvious that Ukraine needs to try something so risky at this point. It is also unclear whether progress across the delta would be straightforward. The area is one of the least reported from in the war, making understanding what is happening difficult.



**Last goodbye** Family and friends pay their respects at the funeral of Valerii Sosnovskii, a Ukrainian soldier killed in fighting in the Donetsk region. The funeral took place in Poltava, south-west of Kharkiv.

PHOTOGRAPH: IHOR TKACHOV/AFP/GETTY




imagery from Copernicus. Shows defences constructed or expanded since Russia's invasion last year, not an exhaustive list

## 3. Into northern Luhansk, threatening Donbas forces

Another option would be to strike into the lightly populated northern Luhansk, aimed at cutting off Russian supply lines that tend to run north-south through Svatove on the frontline and Starobilsk beyond to the east, and in turn threatening positions farther south.

The aspiration would be to achieve a repeat of the September Kharkiv offensive where Ukraine exploited a lightly defended area of the Russian lines farther west, and forced a chaotic retreat on Moscow's forces who were at risk of being outflanked at points during the speedy advance.

Critical here would be to achieve an element of surprise, and, Arnold says, "having the intelligence to identify a Russian weak spot". An attack in this area could work opportunistically, if the Russians over-defend in the south, while threatening it could force Moscow to move some troops 200 miles or so north-east.

## 4. Counterattack around Bakhmut and Soledar

In recent days Ukraine has launched limited counterattacks north of Bakhmut and eight miles to the south-west. Their tentative success suggests Ukraine could try to encircle the battered city and nearby Soledar, threatening exhausted Russian forces.

The disadvantage is that for all the symbolic value that would be gained from regaining the lost majority of Bakhmut, the Donbas area is less strategically significant. Cutting into Russian lines in the east does not threaten Crimea and any effort to capture the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, occupied since 2014, would be fraught.

Where an attack in the east could help is "if it fixes the Russians in the area", Arnold says, meaning it forces Moscow to allocate troops to the eastern front, so giving Ukraine greater opportunity in the south. Probing attacks in Bakhmut could be a prelude to an offensive elsewhere.

# Lack of insulin adds to stress for people with diabetes trying to flee Sudan

**Kaamil Ahmed**

Bags of ice and wet towels have become the emergency lifelines for Sudanese diabetics struggling to keep their insulin cool while they wait in extreme heat to try to escape the recent violence.

Insulin, a vital medication for many diabetics, must be kept cool to be effective, but since fighting broke out between the Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces last month, hospitals and pharmacies have been forced to close and cold-storage facilities have been damaged.

Now, along with the challenge of procuring insulin, those on Sudan's borders are being left in chaotic queues for days as they try to escape, with no way to refrigerate their medicine and scant medical care.

"It was very stressful because me and my sister are insulin dependent. I'm a type 1 diabetic and having working insulin is really a must for me. My entire body was shutting down because we didn't have enough food for the kids and had to ration," said Arwa Zaki Mustafa, 32.

After the RSF surrounded her neighbourhood, Mustafa and her family headed for the Egyptian border but faced long waits to get out of Khartoum and again at the border.

She was fortunate to have replenished her insulin supplies before the fighting broke out, but had to protect it from the 40C heat. When they left, she took a freezable gel pack and kept her insulin pens in her nephew's lunchbox. Along the way she would buy bags of ice wherever she could.

"[At the border] we were stuck outside for 12 hours and that was when I realised my gel was starting to melt. We stayed there for 27 hours and there wasn't much water but what I found I used to wet some towels to wrap the insulin in and tried to keep it out of the sun," she said.

Afnan Hassab, a Sudanese doctor who worked at a Khartoum hospital until it had to close because of the fighting, said insulin access has been a concern since the conflict began and is a problem for those fleeing.

"Some of the older women with me on the bus were taking insulin and they were carrying bags of ice to put their insulin in. The trip was so long and so hot the plastic handles on my bag stretched out. You can only imagine what is happening to the insulin people are trying to preserve,"

Hassab said that with many pharmacies damaged, closed or out of reach for people, there has been a desperate search for medication.

"I think a lot people are going to die. It's a very sad and gruesome thing to say but it's true," she said. "I've already seen cases of diabetic ketoacidosis, where people were not able to reach hospital so they died."

# Look, who's snoring? How comfy are economy class airline bunk beds?

Tess McClure
*Auckland*

At one point, during my attempted nap, I dig out my phone and look up the dimensions of a coffin. A standard adult casket, it turns out, rises to 58cm (23in). Gazing up at the ceiling of my "nest", I calculate it offers about 7cm more clearance than the average coffin.

This is the Skynest: touted as a world-first design, it's a set of airborne bunk beds, created by Air New Zealand to "revolutionise" budget air travel. Available from next year, they will offer economy passengers the chance to stretch out in luxurious, horizontal style.

A snooze in one of the six beds – stacked tightly in pairs – will set the flyer back NZ$400-$600 (£200-£300) for a four-hour session. The bunk room represents a challenge of engineering – fitting six horizontal humans into the space of a small airline galley.

The Skynest glows in low-lit pink behind a black curtain. It is not for the claustrophobic. Entering the bottom bunk requires you to get on your hands and knees and crawl, and exiting requires a quick belly-roll and backwards shuffle.

"Of all the demographics of the people that we've had in the testing – and it's quite a few, 100 people," said Kerry Reeves, Air New Zealand's head of aircraft programmes, "we've not had one person yet who couldn't get in."

Sleepers will be shielded from their fellow nappers by a transparent net curtain, a legal requirement. Crew must be able to see passengers, to ensure they are not smoking – or engaging in other banned activities, said Reeves.

"They are single occupancy for many reasons," he said, "structural and safety as well as, you know, the other human aspects of that."




◀ *Economy passengers will be able to nap in coffin-like comfort for an additional £200-£300*
PHOTOGRAPH: FRAZER CLEMENTS/ AIR NEW ZEALAND

> *'They are single occupancy for safety reasons as well as other human aspects'*
> **Kerry Reeves**
> *Air New Zealand*

Even if it were allowed, double occupancy would be a challenge. There is no room to sit up – and lying down, your head is separated by about a foot from those sleeping in the bunks above and around you.

The Skynest comes with instructions: do not smuggle in children, dogs or additional adults. Do not eat snacks. And, somewhat alarmingly: "Do remember that snoring is perfectly natural."

Reeve says the airline has carried out sound testing but has not yet tested a snorer. He is confident the roar of the plane, earplugs or noise-cancelling headphones will alleviate any issues.

In the interests of research, ensconced in my own bunk, I press play on an audio track titled "12 hours of a male snoring" and place that on the bunk below. It rumbles through the nest. After a few minutes, infuriated, I switch it to "calming aeroplane jet noise".

Lying back in the pale pink glow, the question of what price to put on such a nap arises. It's a difficult thing to price, Reeves says: $400 sounds like a lot compared with a hotel room, but it's far less than a business or first class ticket.

Still, despite the coffin-like feel of the thing, it's a relaxing little pod. A few minutes later I've almost drifted off.

**SECTION 48 PLANNING ACT 2008**
**REGULATION 4 INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009**
**DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER AT BYERS GILL**
**NOTICE PUBLICISING A PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER ("DCO")**

Notice is hereby given that JBM Solar Limited ("the Applicant") of 33 Broadwick St, London W1F ODQ intends to apply to the Secretary of State under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 ("the Act") for a Development Consent Order ("DCO") to authorise the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar farm capable of generating over 50MW Alternating Current (AC) of electricity with co-located Battery Energy Storage System ("BESS"), located between Darlington and Stockton-on-Tees in north-east England (the "Proposed Development"). The Proposed Development's site area is approximately 563 hectares and comprises six solar photovoltaic (PV) panel areas (Panel Areas A-F). An on-site substation would be located within Panel Area C.

The Proposed Development would comprise:
- up to 21km of 33kilovolt (kV) underground cabling between the Panel Areas and the on-site substation;
- approximately 10km of 132kV underground cable to connect the Proposed Development to the grid connection at the existing Norton substation (located to the north-west of Stockton-on-Tees);
- supporting infrastructure comprising BESS; transformers and inverters for managing the electricity produced; storage containers to hold this equipment; and security measures such as fencing, CCTV and lighting; and
- environmental mitigation and enhancement measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts on the surrounding environment and nearby communities.

While the Proposed Development could include compulsory acquisition powers, the Applicant is seeking to avoid the use of such powers if at all possible.
The Proposed Development is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development for the purposes of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This means that the proposed works involved constitute development for which an EIA is required and the proposed application for a DCO will therefore be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. Additionally, the Applicant will be making preliminary environmental information available.
Copies of the PEIR, together with a Non-Technical Summary, our Statement of Community Consultation and other consultation documents, plans and maps detailing our consultation process and details of the Proposed Development may be inspected free of charge until 23:59pm on Friday 16 June 2023 on the project website (www.byersgillsolarfarm.co.uk) and at the following location:

| Location | Day of opening | Opening times |
|---|---|---|
| Norton Library - 87 High St, | Monday, Tuesday, Thursday | 9.30am - 5pm |
| Norton, Stockton-on-Tees | Wednesday, Friday | 9.30am-7pm |
| TS20 1AE | Saturday | 9.30am - 1pm |
| | Sunday | Closed |

Copies of the consultation materials may be requested during the consultation period from the Applicant free of charge (excluding the PEIR which will have a cost of £0.35 per page) using the email address, postal address or telephone number provided below:
- Telephone: 0800 197 0018
- Email: enquiries@byersgillsolar.com Freepost*: Byers Gill Solar

**No stamp is required.*

Any person may comment on the proposals or otherwise respond to this publicity. Responses must be received between **Friday 5 May and Friday 16 June 2023.**

A consultation feedback questionnaire is available as part of the consultation materials, and online at www.byersgillsolarfarm.co.uk. When providing your response, please include your name and address, or, if you would prefer your comments to be anonymous, your postcode online. Please supply any response by submitting your completed feedback form online, or by using the contact methods above.

**Responses must be received no later than 11.59pm on Friday 16 June 2023.**

JBM Solar will consider and have regard to all responses when refining the Proposed Development once the consultation has closed. Responses will form the basis of a Consultation Report that will be one of the factors taken into consideration by the Secretary of State when deciding whether the Application can be accepted for examination. Therefore, in providing any comment, it should be borne in mind that the substance of it may be communicated to others as part of the Consultation Report.

If you would like further information about this notice, the consultation or the Proposed Development, please contact the project team by using one of the contact methods provided above.

Michael Baker
DCO Project Manager, Byers Gill Solar
Email: michael.baker@jbm-solar.com
(Friday 5 May 2023)

# Fear factor Why top Republicans who loathe Trump stay silent

**David Smith**
*Washington*

One day he was found liable for sexual abuse and defamation. The next he was on prime-time TV pushing election lies, defending his coup attempt and refusing to back Ukraine.

To his millions of critics, it was another week that proved Donald Trump is unfit for office and dangerous to democracy. But to the top leaders of Trump's Republican party, it was another week to keep heads down and say nothing.

Kevin McCarthy, the speaker of the House of Representatives, Mitch McConnell, the minority leader in the Senate, leading state governors and even most of Trump's potential rivals for the Republican presidential nomination in 2024 have made a habit of siding with him or remaining silent as each scandal comes and goes.

Critics say their complicity underlines how comprehensively Trump took over the Republican party and shaped it in his own image. Even though McConnell and others privately loathe Trump and wish him gone, they dare not alienate his fervent support base. Rick Wilson, a former Republican consultant and co-founder of the Lincoln Project, an anti-Trump group, sums it up in one word: fear.

"They are afraid of the mob, they're afraid of the horde, they're afraid of the anger and the craziness and the rage and the threats that come any time a Republican elected official really stands up and opposes Donald Trump," Wilson said.

"None of the major elected officials - McConnell, McCarthy, the big state governors - are going to come out and say what they believe and know: that he is a monstrous figure and he is a dangerous figure."

Trump ran against the Republican establishment in 2016, exciting a grassroots army of supporters and bending the party to his will. His victory in the presidential election and pursuit of an agenda that matched Republican priorities persuaded many in the leadership to overlook his chaotic style. Relations with McConnell soured, culminating in the 6 January insurrection at the US Capitol, for which McConnell said Trump was "practically and morally responsible". Trump has branded him an "old crow" and repeatedly hurled racist insults at his Taiwanese-born wife, Elaine Chao.

Even so, McConnell made clear this week that he will support Trump if he is the Republican nominee in 2024. He told CNN: "I'm going to support the nominee … no matter who that may be."

Steve Daines, chair of the Senate Republicans' campaign arm, has endorsed Trump for president in what many see as an attempt to curry favour with him and curb his meddling in next year's Senate elections. Trump's backing of extremists in last year's midterms cost McConnell control of the Senate - an outcome that he is eager to avoid repeating.



▲ *Donald Trump is protected by his fervent support base in the party*

McCarthy, for his part, seemed shaken by the events of 6 January, but later that month he visited Trump's Mar-a-Lago home in Florida, signalling that all was forgiven. When McCarthy was elected speaker this year after a gruelling series of votes, he paid tribute to Trump for working the phones to help him secure victory. Since then he has swatted aside every legal controversy.

This week, in a civil case, a New York jury determined that Trump sexually abused and defamed the writer E Jean Carroll, awarding her $5m (£4m) in damages (Trump is appealing against the verdict). That alone would be enough to sink most political careers, but McCarthy repeatedly dodged the issue. Other Republicans went further in expressing their fealty to Trump. Senator Marco Rubio of Florida told reporters: "That jury's a joke. The whole case is a joke." Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina added: "When it comes to Donald Trump, the New York legal system is off the rails." The former vice-president Mike Pence told NBC News: "In my four and a half years serving alongside the president, I never heard or witnessed behaviour of that nature."

The following day, Trump gave an unhinged performance full of lies in a town hall event broadcast live on the CNN network. He vowed to pardon "a large portion" of the 6 January rioters, suggested that Republicans should let the government default on its debts and refused to call Vladimir Putin a war criminal over the killing of Ukrainian civilians. Strikingly, many in the audience applauded Trump and egged him on. When he made fun of Carroll they laughed.

Later, Chris Christie, a former governor of New Jersey, described Trump as "Putin's puppet", and there was condemnation from a few other Republicans. But these are exceptions that prove the rule.



**No way through** Asylum seekers and US Border Patrol agents on either side of a barbed wire fence erected by US authorities on the banks of the Rio Bravo between Matamoros, Mexico, and Brownsville, Texas, on Thursday. The US ended a tough Covid-19 border restriction that had blocked many people at the border with Mexico at midnight on Thursday, immediately replacing the order known as Title 42 with a sweeping new asylum regulation meant to deter illegal crossings. In chaotic scenes people scrambled to enter the US before Title 42 expired and the new rule went into effect. There was relative calm along the border yesterday, authorities said.

PHOTOGRAPH: DANIEL BECERRIL/REUTERS

# Man surrenders to US police over chokehold death

**Guardian staff and agencies**

The man who killed Jordan Neely after putting him in a chokehold while on a subway in New York has been charged with second-degree manslaughter, the Manhattan district attorney's office said yesterday.

Daniel Penny, 24, could face up to 15 years in prison if found guilty under the charge. He surrendered himself to New York police yesterday morning. He was later seen being led from a New York police department precinct in lower Manhattan with his hands cuffed behind his back, wearing a suit, on his way to court.

The killing nearly two weeks ago has triggered widespread anger across New York and the US. The death of Neely, a homeless Michael Jackson impersonator who was Black, has become a symbol of inequality in the US amid concern over racism and paranoia over crime and vigilantism. Penny is white.

Neely's family have condemned Penny for offering neither "an apology nor an expression of regret" in a statement about the incident that he released through lawyers and which highlighted Neely's mental health struggles. Penny's lawyers previously said their client, along with two other riders who helped restrain Neely, had acted in self-defence.

The Neely family called the statement "a character assassination and a clear example of why he believed he was entitled to take Jordan's life".

# Life in seclusion

## Japan's hikikomori crisis worsened by pandemic

**Justin McCurry**
*Tokyo*

Vosot Ikeida traces the start of his life of isolation to a time when most people start to spread their wings. Ikeida (not his real name) had moved from his family home in Nagoya, central Japan, to study at a university in Tokyo when he began to feel alienated from his peers.

"The campus was full of smart boys who were aiming to become businessmen, politicians and lawyers," said Ikeida, 60. "I couldn't find anyone who shared my views about the world. I quickly realised that I was in the wrong place … that I wasn't suited to it. I was a stranger."

He tried to break free from isolation by travelling overseas, only to spend most of his time holed up in hotel rooms, unable to contemplate a simple sightseeing trip. "I read, wrote, drank, and slept. I didn't like travelling after all. I was a *hikikomori* overseas."

Japan's health ministry defines a hikikomori - a term coined in the 1990s by the journalist Tamaki Saito - as someone who has remained isolated at home for at least six months, shunning school or work and rarely interacting with people outside immediate family.

But in one sense, Ikeida is far from alone. Almost 1.5 million people of working age - or one in 50 Japanese - are living as hikikomori, a combination of the Japanese verbs to "pull back" and "seclude oneself", with about a fifth of cases attributed to the Covid pandemic.

In a cabinet office survey last month, large numbers of hikikomori said they had suffered severe social withdrawal as a result of relationship issues or after losing or leaving their jobs. But 20.6% said it had been triggered by the pandemic.



▼ *Men account for about 60% of recorded cases of Japanese people who live highly isolated lives*
PHOTOGRAPH: GRANT FAINT/GETTY

While Japan did not enforce UK-style lockdowns, it asked people to avoid unnecessary outings, and some employers and universities turned to remote working and learning.

"The pandemic made us realise that teleworking, remote learning and home deliveries are very useful," said Ikeida. "Many of these lifestyle changes remained even after Covid-19 passed."

Prolonged social disconnection was once regarded as a condition that only affected socially maladjusted young men confined to their bedrooms and hooked on video games, manga and anime, but it now affects a much wider demographic.

While an estimated 60% of cases recorded are men, more women are coming forward to describe their post-pandemic experience of isolation. "I sometimes think about taking a walk in the morning, but then my muscles become stiff … I can't get my body to go outside," Michi, 45, from Tokyo,who lost her job in the pandemic, told the public broadcaster NHK.

**1.5m**
*The number of Japanese people of working age who suffer from prolonged social disconnection*

Concern over an increase in hikikomori has spurred initiatives to encourage people to break free of their isolation, if only temporarily or, in some cases, virtually.

The Tokyo ward of Edogawa, home to an estimated 9,000 hikikomori, will hold metaverse socialising events next month to give people the opportunity to meet via their avatars. Kyoto prefecture organises virtual meetups twice a month, with participants ranging from teenagers to people in their 40s.

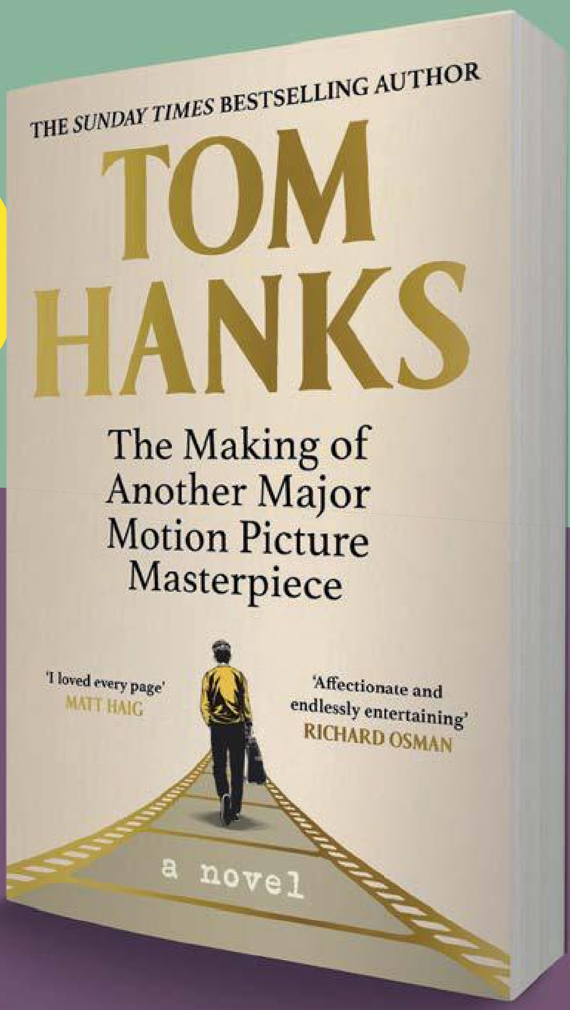
Ikeida regularly holds online and in-person events to give people with similar problems the chance to "exchange emotions, information and courage", plus sessions for parents and children who have stopped communicating at home.

He said:"I can't go out as often as 'normal' people do. I go out on average only once every three or four days. I sleep 14 hours a day.

"I have absolutely no contact with my neighbours or relatives. I correspond with lots of people online, without stepping out of my room. That's the best I can do for now. I am still a hikikomori."

G Handpicked reads

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WHSmith EST·1792 | The Guardian

# Leaving home Italian students camp out in protest over rents

**Angela Giuffrida**
*Rome*

Mirko Giuggiolini gets up at 5am for the commute from his parents' home in Ronciglione to Rome, an almost two-hour journey by bus, train and metro, in order to make it in time for his 8am lecture at Sapienza University. Then the 19-year-old makes the journey home after his last lecture, which on some days finishes at 8pm.

But he has had enough. For the past few nights has been sleeping in a tent outside the university as part of a growing movement of students across Italy protesting against high rents. "The commute is draining both financially and physically; I end up too tired to study," said Giuggiolini, a first-year law student. "But the rents in Rome are totally unsustainable."

The protest was started by Ilaria Lamera, an engineering student at Milan Polytechnic, before spreading to Rome and other cities including Florence, Bologna, Padua and Cagliari. Lamera had been commuting to university from her home town of Bergamo, and when she looked for a room to rent in Milan she struggled to find one for less than €600 (£520) a month.

"Rome is just as expensive," said Viki Angelini, a political science student who has been camped outside Sapienza since Monday night. "I pay €500 for a room but for two years did a one-and-a-half-hour commute."

> *'The commute is draining but the rents in Rome are totally unsustainable'*
>
> **Mirko Giuggiolini**
> *Law student*

Almost 70% of university students in Italy live with their parents, compared with the EU average of 17%, according to a Eurostat report. University-provided accommodation is scarce, and usually available only to students from low-income families or those who are disabled.

Valentina Capalbo, who has a motor disability, moved to Rome from Calabria for her degree in cultural heritage, which she completed in March. She lives in assisted housing, the cost of which comes out of her monthly €800 grant. The 31-year-old can stay in the accommodation until she finds a job. "Then I'm left to fend for myself," she said. "It's impossible to find a place in Rome adapted for people with disabilities."

Young Italians continue to struggle after obtaining their degree owing to a precarious job market and high cost of living, and will, on average, continue to live with their parents until they are just over 30. "We are among the last in Europe to leave our parents' home," said Giuggiolini. "Jobs are mainly on temporary contracts and with low wages – not enough to rent a home and we can only dream about buying one."

Sara Mariotti, 26, lives with her mother in Cagliari. She works as a Deliveroo rider while studying for a master's in public administration. "It's a very flexible job as you don't have fixed work hours … so I can study and work and don't need to depend on my mother for money." She said the average rent for a decent apartment in Cagliari was €600-€700 a month.

Thousands of young Italians leave the country each year in search of work overseas. "Unlike in places like Germany, where there are agreements between universities and companies that mean students are trained to fill specialist jobs, in Italy there is a big gap between studying and the world of work," said Mariotti.

In response to the protests, Giorgia Meloni's government said it would invest €660m – money that would come from Italy's share of the EU's post-Covid recovery fund – to create new university accommodation. University rectors have also urged the government to convert empty state property into student homes as a more immediate solution.

# Portugal could ban smoking in outdoor covered terraces and near schools

**Sam Jones**

The Portuguese government has announced draft legislation that would restrict tobacco sales and ban smoking in covered outdoor terraces and near schools, hospitals and sports venues in an attempt to create a smoke-free generation by 2040.

The health minister, Manuel Pizarro, said the proposals were intended to tackle tobacco use and not to punish smokers or the owners of businesses.

"This is a bill that takes firm steps towards promoting health and protecting people from exposure to tobacco smoke," he said.

If the proposals are approved by parliament, smoking outside bars, restaurants and cafes – and next to public buildings such as hospitals, schools, universities and sports venues – will be banned from 23 October. "We propose extending the ban on smoking outdoors within the perimeter of public access or collective use areas – above all in spaces where the most vulnerable people are present," Pizarro said.

The law would also ban the sale of tobacco products in bars, cafes, restaurants and petrol stations from 2025, meaning such products could be bought only from licensed tobacconists, airport shops or from vending machines.

It would also prohibit the sale of flavoured heated tobacco products and reduce young people's exposure to tobacco products and electronic cigarettes by limiting access and reducing "advertising, promotion and sponsorship, to discourage experimentation, consumption and dependence".

The creation of new smoking areas would be banned from October next year, but bars, clubs and restaurants that already have permission for such areas would be allowed to maintain the spaces until 2030.

The minister defended the "balanced" move to crack down on tobacco use in bars and restaurants, saying the hospitality sector had not suffered since the introduction of the 2007 law that restricted smoking in enclosed public areas.

The Socialist government said the aim was to save thousands of lives each year by reducing incentives for smoking and to bring about a tobacco-free generation by 2040. Two-thirds of deaths among smokers are due to tobacco consumption. There were about 13,500 deaths attributable to tobacco in 2019 in Portugal, whose population is just over 10.3 million.

Portugal's Provar restaurant association said the measures would deprive struggling small businesses of a source of revenue.




▲ *A cafe in Lisbon. Below, cigarette butts collected in one week, at Commerce Square in Lisbon*
PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE HOWARD/ALAMY



**13,500**
*The number of deaths attributable to tobacco in 2019 in Portugal whose population is 10.3 million*

*Additional reporting* **Reuters**



▲ *Eels smuggled from Europe to Asia can fetch up to €5,000 a kilo*

# Spanish police seize 1.5 tonnes of live eels in raid on gang

**Sam Jones**
*Madrid*

Police in Spain and France have arrested 27 people and seized 1.5 tonnes of live baby eels, as well as goods worth more than €2m (£1.7m), after breaking up a gang dedicated to breeding the critically endangered fishes and smuggling them to China.

Officers also recovered tonnes of frozen elvers, which are prized as a delicacy in Spain and parts of Asia, that had not been subject to any food safety checks and were not suitable for human consumption.

Given its critically endangered status on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list of threatened species, the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) is subject to EU quotas on fishing and distribution, and its export beyond the bloc is strictly forbidden.

Over recent years, however, the baby eels have caught the attention of criminal gangs who smuggle the fish from Europe to Asia, where they can fetch up to €5,000 a kilo.

The joint police operation – which involved Spain's Guardia Civil, France's Gendarmerie Nationale, Europol and the European Anti-Fraud Office – began in 2021 when customs and police officers were alerted to "irregularities" in the European trade of elvers and eels.

Officers uncovered an international gang engaged in an illegal supply and distribution operation.

"This group, which was made up of fishers as well as business managers and wholesalers, took it upon itself to circumvent the legal supply of live baby eels by supplying them to citizens of Chinese origin who had clandestine hatcheries in parts of Paris and Antwerp," the Guardia Civil said in a statement.

"From there, they organised trips to Asia for people who departed from European airports close to the hatcheries, carrying eels hidden in their luggage."

After more than 30 simultaneous searches of homes, business and clandestine hatcheries in Spain, France, Belgium and Poland, police on Thursday arrested 27 people on suspicion of belonging to a criminal organisation, trafficking in a protected species, smuggling and money laundering.

The Guardia Civil said the live eels they had recovered would be released back into the wild.

# Business

## Autonomy founder on bail after extradition to California in fraud case

**Mark Sweeney**

The British tech entrepreneur Mike Lynch has been extradited to the US, where a court has ordered him to pay a $100m (£80m) bond and be placed under 24-hour armed guard to ensure he does not flee the country.

Lynch, who was once lauded as Britain's answer to Bill Gates, is facing criminal fraud charges. He is alleged to have duped the US firm Hewlett-Packard into overpaying when it struck an $11bn deal to buy his software firm Autonomy in 2011.

He has always denied any wrongdoing.

His arrival in San Francisco marked the end of a two-year effort to avoid extradition to the US, where he could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted.

Lynch was accompanied by the members of the United States Marshals Service when he landed on Thursday, four years after originally being indicted, to face a court order granting bail and conditions on his release.

Charles Breyer, the senior US district judge presiding over the case, said Lynch's years-long fight against extradition, vast wealth and lack of significant connections to the US meant he was almost certainly a flight risk. At the bail hearing Lynch's lawyer said that his client was worth $400m to $450m.

Breyer told the court: "Clearly,



▲ *Mike Lynch had to pay a $100m bond to ensure he stays in the US*

Lynch's conduct signifies that he would rather be in the United Kingdom – or perhaps anywhere else – than in the United States facing these charges. Courts frequently find that defendants with such vast wealth present a substantial risk of flight."

The judge said if possible he would had ordered immediate detention, butthat under the US Bail Reform Act he had to assess whether there were conditions of release that would ensure Lynch's presence at trial.

The court released Lynch from custody with a number of conditions, including a $100m bond, confinement to an address in San Francisco and a 24-hour security detail – "including video surveillance and armed guards" – that must be paid for by him.

He had said he was considering a last-ditch appeal to the European court of human rights (ECHR) after a high court ruling in London last month that allowed him to be extradited.

"On 21 April, the high court refused Dr Lynch's permission to appeal his extradition," a Home Office spokesperson said. "As a result, the normal 28-day statutory deadline for surrender to the US applies. Dr Lynch was extradited to the US on 11 May."

Lynch was a founding investor in the cybersecurity firm Darktrace, was awarded an OBE for services to enterprise and previously served as a non-executive director of the BBC and an adviser to David Cameron when he was prime minister.

Last year, Hewlett-Packard won a six-year civil fraud case in the UK against Lynch after a high court judge ruled he had defrauded HP by manipulating Autonomy accounts to inflate the value of the UK company.

The then home secretary, Priti Patel, subsequently approved the extradition of Lynch to face criminal trial in the US on 14 counts of conspiracy and fraud over claims that investors in HP lost billions because of his actions.

Sushovan Hussain, Autonomy's former finance director, was jailed in 2019 for five years in the US after being found guilty of fraud relating to the same deal.

Legal experts had said Lynch's chances of blocking the extradition by turning to the ECHR were low.

The law firm Corker Binning said only 8% of applications to the ECHR in such cases – seeking a rule 39 order to stop the UK extradition until it has considered the case – were successful last year.

### British tech pioneer with a passion for Bond films

**As Mike Lynch adjusts to life confined to a court-approved address in San Francisco, watched by armed guards as he awaits trial for criminal fraud, the tech tycoon, once lauded as Britain's Bill Gates, will have plenty of time to contemplate his spectacular fall from grace.**

**Lynch, 57, is facing up to 25 years in prison if he is found guilty of allegations he duped Hewlett-Packard into overpaying when it struck an $11bn deal (£8.2bn) deal for his software firm Autonomy in 2011.**

**Sushovan Hussain, a former finance director at Autonomy, is already in jail in the US after being found guilty of fraud relating to the deal, and last year Lynch lost a six-year civil fraud case brought by HP in the UK. Lynch has always denied the allegations of wrongdoing. Regardless of the outcome of his trial, it marks an ignominious end to the reputation of a man known as one of Britain's few global tech champions.**

**Before HP cried foul over the takeover deal, which made Lynch about £500m, he was revered for the success of his venture, which was one of the leading lights in the cluster of tech firms around Cambridge known as Silicon Fen.**

**He received an OBE for services to enterprise in 2006, the same year he was appointed to the bard of the BBC and he was elected to David Cameron's council for science and technology in 2011. Even as tech analysts began to question Autonomy's business model, Lynch pushed through a high-flying £20m shirt sponsorship of Tottenham Hotspur in 2010.**

**He also indulged his love of James Bond films at his companies. Conference rooms were reportedly named after Bond enemies, such as Dr No and Goldfinger, and Autonomy had a piranha tank in the atrium, in a nod to the 007 movie You Only Live Twice.**

**Lawyers representing Lynch at his bail hearing in California this week have estimated that he is worth as much as $450m (£361m).
Mark Sweney**




## John Lewis The sagging shopping experience that needs reviving with a big dose of pizzazz

**Sarah Butler**

Almost a quarter of staff representatives voted against John Lewis boss Sharon White in a crucial confidence vote this week, raising questions about her plan to return the owner of 34 department stores and the Waitrose supermarket chain to profitability.

Details of the vote count, published on the John Lewis Partnership website last night, revealed a significant rebellion at the employee-owned business. Of the 55 members of the staff council who voted, 24% were against the former civil servant continuing to lead the business, while 92% said they did not support her performance over the past year.

It came after a £243m loss last year which left staff without a bonus. White said she had decided against short-term fixes, but what options does she have to turn the high street favourite's fortunes around?

**What has gone wrong?**
Profits at the John Lewis Partnership (JLP) had been declining for several years before its recent slump into the red. Its department stores have struggled to adapt to the switch to online shopping, while the cost of running its large high street outlets has

| FTSE 100 | All share | Dow Indl | Nikkei 225 | £/€ | £/$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| +24.04 | +8.84 | -160.16 | +261.58 | 1.1480 | 1.2470 |
| 7754.62 | 4224.06 | 33149.35 | 29388.30 | +0.0010 | -0.0052 |





▲ *Sharon White has to return the department stores and Waitrose supermarkets (top) to profit*
PHOTOGRAPH: LORNE CAMPBELL/GUZELIAN

surged. The group's Waitrose supermarkets had been doing well until the last couple of years, when they became squeezed between heavy price competition from below from the likes of Tesco, Sainsbury's, Aldi and Lidl, and a resurgent Marks & Spencer at the upper end of the market.

John Lewis has shut 16 loss-making department stores, trimmed back its supermarket estate and tried to reduce head office costs, but appears to have lost ground to rivals on customer service and price.

With White, a former civil servant without retail experience as chairman, and another non-retailer, Nish Kankiwala, the former boss of Hovis, as chief executive, Waitrose and John Lewis stores stand accused of failing to emphasise their point of difference sufficiently and being too slow to tackle basic issues with availability, range and price positioning.

**Why does John Lewis want to raise funds?**
White wants to create a more profitable stream of income from building flats to rent above some stores. Retail watchers also argue the group needs to invest in making its stores more exciting and improving customer service.

JLP has £300m of debts to repay in January 2025 (plus £50m sooner) and needs funds for its restructuring programme. The IT system at Waitrose is outdated while the partnership's £500m step into rental property with fund manager Abrdn is a project with a long payback period.

The balance sheet may not be creaking but the group has no shareholders to call on and so must be particularly careful about maintaining a cushion.

**How could it raise the money?**
On Wednesday, White scotched suggestions that the group might end its mutual model, pledging it would remain employee-owned, but suggested the possibility of external investment if at any point they were "unable to fund all our plans through our own means".

Even if the group's employees were willing to give up a 25% stake to an outside investor - which might be possible while retaining ultimate control by the employees - the partnership would have to be worth £8bn to raise the £2bn they are reportedly considering.

That seems an unlikely valuation when M&S, which is on a roll, has a stock market value of about £3bn, while John Lewis is loss-making with big questions over its brands.

**Can John Lewis stores survive?**
Last year sales at the department stores were flat at £4.9bn but operating profits slumped 11% to £676m as costs rose. Sources say the business has suffered from some questionable tactics with poor morale under its now departed boss Pippa Wicks. Former insiders urge the appointment of a "retail star" with some good ideas.

Ditching the brand's "never knowingly undersold" promise may have been inevitable, as it became increasingly meaningless because online competitors were not included. However, the company needs a far clearer and more attractive new promise to shoppers than current slogan "for all life's moments". With its former rival Debenhams now off the high street and M&S moving to the edge of town, there could be a gap in the market for a middle-age-friendly playground in the centre of town.

**What about Waitrose?**
As a smaller player among the top grocers, Waitrose lacks the scale to negotiate tough enough deals with suppliers to win on price. It can deliver a difference on quality, service and the shopping experience, but some of that has sagged.

# Boss of Tesco paid almost £4.5m despite profits halving

**Sarah Butler**

The boss of Tesco was paid almost £4.5m last year despite profits halving and prices for shoppers rising.

Ken Murphy's total package of £4.4m was down from £4.7m a year earlier after his bonus dipped because of missed targets on profits and food waste. His basic salary increased by 1.7% to £1.4m.

The chief executive's basic salary has risen another 3% this year. That means his total pay package in the year ahead, including his annual bonus, could reach up to £5m, with a further £3.9m in long-term bonuses lined up depending on his performance over the next three years.

Tesco, which owns the Booker grocery wholesaler and runs stores in eastern Europe and the Republic of Ireland as well as in the UK, has said it expects underlying operating profit to remain flat in the year ahead. It has pledged to "prioritise investment in our customer offer while doing everything" it can to "offset the impact of ongoing elevated cost inflation".

Supermarkets are under pressure to take action against soaring food prices, with the prime minister, Rishi Sunak, due to host a meeting of big suppliers, retailers and industry bodies in Downing Street on Tuesday.

Supermarket leaders told government officials in a phone meeting on Thursday night that they believed inflation was easing.

The prices of some key foods, including milk, butter and bread, have been cut in recent weeks at big chains. But overall food prices are expected to continue to rise throughout the second half of this year.

The consumer group Which? has criticised Tesco and other big supermarkets for not doing enough to keep down the cost of essential foods.

It has highlighted the poor availability of budget own-label ranges in supermarkets' small local stores, where many people on low incomes shop, as well as high inflation on those products when compared with the major brands.

Announcing a £516m end-of-year dividend for shareholders last month, compared with a £588m payout the year before, Murphy said: "I feel very comfortable with what we are doing for shareholders as it is balanced relative to other stakeholders we have a responsibility to look after."



▲ *Ken Murphy's basic salary rose 1.7% last year, but his bonus dipped*

# Musk names US advertising executive as Twitter chief

**Dan Milmo**
*Global technology editor*

Elon Musk has announced that US advertising executive Linda Yaccarino will become Twitter's new chief executive and that she will start at the social media platform in about six weeks.

Twitter's owner and chief executive said in December he was stepping down as soon as he found someone "foolish enough to take the job".

Musk said this week that the wait was over. Yaccarino was the global head of advertising at NBCUniversal, the entertainment conglomerate behind the NBC TV network and the Universal film studio, where she had been for 12 years.

"I am excited to welcome Linda Yaccarino as the new CEO of Twitter!" Musk said. "@LindaYacc will focus primarily on business operations, while I focus on product design & new technology."

Musk bought the business for $44bn (£35bn) last October. He will be executive chair at Twitter with responsibility for several areas, including IT infrastructure.

Since Musk acquired Twitter, advertisers have fled the platform, worried that their ads could appear next to inappropriate content after the company lost nearly 80% of staff. Musk earlier this year acknowledged that Twitter suffered a massive decline in ad revenue.

His adherence to free speech principles as a self-declared "free speech absolutist" has caused controversy and jarred with advertisers - Twitter's main source of income. Musk has overseen the reinstatement of previously banned accounts, such as those belonging to Donald Trump and the misogynist influencer Andrew Tate.

The company's initial relaunch last year of its subscription service, Twitter Blue, was chaotic, after pranksters exploited the opportunity to verify their account for $8 a month by launching fake accounts for brands and public figures.

Last month, it emerged that Twitter had been folded into a new shell company, X Corp. Musk has referred to Twitter as being an "accelerant" for creating X, his "everything app".

▼ *The Resolution Foundation said 3.8 million homeowners had moved to a higher mortgage rate since 2021*
PHOTOGRAPH: CHUNYIP WONG/GETTY/ISTOCK



# Bank's interest rate increases will cost mortgage holders total of £12bn extra

**Phillip Inman**

Soaring interest rates will cost UK mortgage holders £12bn in extra payments and the impact will be felt mostly by young families, according to a leading thinktank.

In a report that emphasised the dramatic effect of higher borrowing costs, the Resolution Foundation said the Bank of the England's 12 consecutive interest rate rises since December 2021 had already cost homeowners £4.2bn, and that about £8bn more in higher payments was probable over the next couple of years.

More than 1.6 million homeowners are expected to refinance their fixed rate loans this year, forcing them to pay an average of £2,300 extra a year in interest payments.

In the first estimate of the overall cost, the thinktank said 3.8 million households had shifted to a higher mortgage rate since 2021, either because they were on a variable or tracker, or they were one of the 35% of homeowners with a fixed rate product that expired before last March.

A further 3.7 million households had not seen their rate change up to March but most would be paying more by next summer after their fixed rates expire.

Wealthier households with expensive houses and large loans will pay the bulk of the extra cost. "However, the scale of the living standards shock will be greatest for those low- and middle-income households who are affected," Resolution said.

Repayments will increase by more than 4% of income for mortgage payers in the bottom 20% to 40% income group, compared with just 2% for those in the top 20%.

On Thursday, the Bank's monetary policy committee raised interest rates by a quarter of a point to 4.5% in an effort to tackle a stubbornly elevated inflation rate, which stood at 10.1% in March.

Some analysts have argued that a combination of higher personal taxes and mortgage rates will push the economy into recession later this year. The economy narrowly avoided contracting in the first quarter, according to data from the ONS yesterday that showed a 0.1% increase in gross national product.

However, that growth was the worst among the G7 group of leading economies after an unexpected contraction of 0.3% in March. It meant the UK economy was 0.5% smaller in the first quarter of 2023 than it was in the same period before the pandemic.

In contrast, the US economy was 5.3% larger than its pre-Covid size, France's was 1.3% larger, and Germany's was 0.1% smaller.

The fall in March was driven largely by weakness in the retail sector, with consumer spending squeezed by the cost of living crisis. The wet weather also dampened demand. The sluggish start to the year was likely to concern the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, who said the UK remained on course to be a "high-growth economy".

Analysts said Britain faced a difficult situation going into the summer, with millions of households finding that lower gas prices would be offset by higher income taxes and a rise in mortgage costs.

Suren Thiru, the economics director at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, said the MPC's decision to raise interest rates to 4.5% "may soon look like a misstep". He added: "The likely squeeze on consumer spending and investment from higher taxes, and the lagged impact of rising interest rates, may mean that our growth prospects are weaker than the Bank of England currently expects."

Some analysts have predicted the economy will contract in the second quarter of the year, although the Bank's latest forecast says a downturn is likely to be avoided in every quarter of 2023.

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research said the UK economy could grow again in the second quarter after a rebound in April. Paula Bejarano Carbo, an associate economist at the forecasting group, said: "Encouragingly, the services, production, and construction sectors all saw quarter-on-quarter growth – a further sign that the economy as a whole is exhibiting more resilience than previously thought."

Yael Selfin, the chief economist at KPMG UK, said this still meant a long period of stagnation stretching into 2024. "Although business sentiment continues to improve, bolstered in part by the fall in wholesale energy prices, we expect investment to be constrained this year amid the tightening in credit conditions and uncertainty about the direction of future policy," she said.

**£2,300**
*Average extra mortgage payments over 1.6m will have to pay this year as their fixed rate deals end*

**4.5%**
*The Bank base rate after it was increased for the 12th consecutive time since December 2021*

**Analysis**
**Larry Elliott**



## *Economy in limbo as strikes and inflation take their toll*

**The UK economy has been going nowhere for the past year. After rebounding most of the way out of its pandemic trough by early last year, there has been virtually no movement. In three of the last four quarters – including the first three months of 2023 – there was growth of 0.1%, and in the other the economy contracted by 0.1%. This is unusual. Periods when the economy moves sideways are rare, especially ones that go for as long as a year. They tend to be followed either by recession or recovery, and while the signs are that it will be the latter, it is too soon to say for sure.**

**On the upside, the economy continued to expand through what was always going to be a tough winter. A combination of double-digit inflation and widespread strikes represented two serious headwinds to activity, and even 0.1% growth is better than most forecasters were expecting.**

**There are signs these headwinds are easing. There should be fewer days lost through strikes, while the GDP deflator – a measure of domestic inflation – rose at an annual rate of 6.3% in the first three months of 2023, down from 7.3% in the final quarter of 2022.**

**On the downside, the economy still looks fragile. The expansion in the first quarter was entirely down to growth in January. There was no increase in activity in February, while the economy contracted by 0.3% in March. Consumer-facing parts of the services sector were particularly weak. Retail activity was down by 1.4%, while food and accommodation fell by 0.8%, evidence that consumers are feeling the pinch from rising interest rates and the cost of living squeeze. A wet March didn't help.**

**It will take time for the full impact of the 12 increases in interest rates to be felt by consumers, with the Bank of England estimating that about two-thirds of the effects are yet to come. The additional bank holiday for the coronation means the economy is likely to continue its crab-like sideways pattern in the second quarter.**

**With the possibility of more interest rate rises to come, it is still too soon to sound the all clear, let alone hang out the bunting. The economy is still 0.5% smaller than it was in late 2019, before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.**

**Money hacks**
**How to get a bargain at charity shops**
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**Fantasy house hunt**
**Homes for sale in the super suburbs**
*Page 53*





# Money



# Audiobooks How to listen for less – or even for free

We review 15 services and look at options if you want to avoid the Amazon-owned market leader, Audible. **Donna Ferguson** reports

Beth Leitch listened to more than 200 audiobooks last year. "I have chronic fatigue syndrome – also known as ME – and was having to rest all day," the 17-year-old says.

Unable to read anything in print without getting a headache, she felt she was going out of her mind from boredom. "Then someone suggested audiobooks to me, and it completely changed my life."

She now consumes about 15 audiobooks a month – and, impressively, manages this on a monthly budget of only £20. Her secret? She is saving an estimated £1,000 a year by using alternatives to Audible, the audiobook subscription service owned by Amazon. "I'm an environmentalist and I make an effort to buy stuff from anywhere else [other than Amazon]," Leitch says.

While Audible and its vast catalogue of titles has dominated the UK audiobook market for years, a plethora of ethical retailers and subscription services have now sprung up, offering attractive alternatives to the online company – and often at cheaper prices, too.

Some even provide free access to audiobooks in certain circumstances.

So what options are out there, how much do they cost, and how do their collections of titles compare with Audible?

## Our main findings

Guardian Money put 15 different audiobook collections to the test: Audible, Apple Books, Audiobooks.com, BBC Sounds, BookBeat, BorrowBox, Kobo, LibriVox, Listening Books, OverDrive, Scribd, Spiracle, Spotify, uLibrary and xigxag. We randomly chose 50 audiobooks – 10 classic novels, 10 nonfiction books and the rest a mixture of popular bestsellers and literary fiction – and checked to see which titles were available where, and how much they would cost.

Only Audible offered access to 100% of the 50 titles we chose, for an average upfront cost of £16.57 a book to non-subscribers. However, most titles – more than 80% – were also available to buy from Apple Books (98%), Kobo (92%), Spotify (90%) and xigxag (84%).

**£24.99**

*Price of Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens on Audible if the buyer has no subscription*

**£7.99**

*Price of the same book on xigxag, which does not operate a subscription model*

▲ *A wide range of audiobook options are available offering attractive alternatives to Amazon's Audible*
PHOTO: HISPANOLISTIC/GETTY/ISTOCKPHOTO

Of those four, and indeed across all the commercial audiobook services we looked at, xigxag consistently offered the most significant savings and charged the lowest average price: £7.68 a book.

Apple Books was close behind, charging £8.81 a book on average.

However, the savings on individual books at xigxag can be significant. To give an example of how prices can differ, at the time of writing, the audiobook of the bestselling novel Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens was £24.99 on Audible, £24.99 on Kobo, £24.90 on Spotify, £9.99 on Apple Books, and £7.99 on xigxag.

## Subscriptions and 'credits'

You can dramatically reduce most of these upfront prices by subscribing to a particular

**Continued** *on page 50*




▲ *Amazon's Audible and its vast catalogue of titles has dominated the UK audiobook market for years*
PHOTOGRAPH: BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES

**Continued** *Page 49*

collection, however, and buying the book with a "credit". Audible members receive one credit each month in exchange for a monthly £7.99 subscription. Kobo charges less: £6.99 a month, again for one credit, which you can redeem against any of the titles in its catalogue. Both allow a single credit to be used to buy expensive £24.99 audiobooks such as Where the Crawdads Sing, so subscribers effectively pay a third of the price charged to non-subscribers.

Xigxag, by contrast, doesn't operate a subscription model. Instead, loyalty is rewarded: while titles never cost more than £7.99 at this retailer, the more you buy, the less you will pay for the rest of that year. For example, if you buy more than 20 titles, your subsequent purchases that year will be £3.99 each.

Leitch likes the flexibility of this non-subscription approach. She now gets most of the books she buys from xigxag and says she feels smug when she pays £3.99 for a book that costs £25 elsewhere.

Xigxag has some good ethical credentials, too – it is a certified B Corp company, indicating the business successfully adheres to high social and environmental standards, and was designated an Ethical Consumer best buy for audiobooks.

Our research suggests it is often not, however, the cheapest place to buy a classic novel. Kobo and Apple Books offered better value when it came to this category, selling these audiobooks for as little as 99p.

Overall, the cheapest subscription service we found was BookBeat, which charges only £5.99 a month. This entitles you to 20 hours of listening a month (it also has pricier options offering up to 100 hours) – so enough time to hear Death on the Nile by Agatha Christie (eight hours, 13 minutes) twice but not Ulysses by James Joyce (37 hours, 35 minutes).

## Support UK independents

A new alternative to Audible – particularly if you plan to listen to two books a month and are keen to support authors and small, independent presses – is a Spiracle subscription for £12 a month or £120 a year. This entitles you to two audiobooks a month from a curated collection of 300-400 titles, plus you will get free access to short stories and podcasts. Alternatively, you can pay for each title as you go. But since most will cost about £10 or £12 upfront, a subscription is likely to offer a better deal.

Spiracle's collection is designed to be unique and very different from Audible's, and so, perhaps unsurprisingly, only 11 (22%) of the 50 titles we selected were available to listen to. These included the nonfiction classic Black Skin, White Masks by Frantz Fanon, Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier and a new narration by Martin Jarvis of Jerome K Jerome's Three Men in a Boat. However, the savings on these works were significant. Each was available for about half the price you would pay on Audible to buy those books upfront, without a subscription.

Helen Boaden, the former director of radio at the BBC, is "completely addicted to audiobooks" and was an early subscriber to Spiracle. "I was keen to see an independent British company succeed in giving a voice to independent contemporary writers and some slightly offbeat classics. And I wasn't disappointed. The quality of the audiobooks is exceptional and I think the deal is a bargain – it has exposed me to readings I wouldn't have seen on Audible or elsewhere. I've been really impressed by the service."

She found a narration of Ti Amo by the Norwegian author Hanne Ørstavik particularly entrancing, and was impressed with other contemporary novels she has found on Spiracle. "I think the curators have got great taste – they're very eclectic and thoughtful about their audience." Coming from a radio background, she is "quite picky" about the voices she listens to: "What you find with big audio companies is that everything is in an American accent," she says. "I can't stand it." By contrast, she says listening to Martin Jarvis reading Three Men in a Boat is "amazing. It's stunningly good."

## A charity that can help

Listening Books, the national audiobook charity, is another resource you may be eligible to use if you have a disability, learning difficulty or mental health condition that makes it hard for you to read print (such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, depression, frailty and autism). It costs as little as £20 a year to join, with some free memberships available to people who cannot afford to pay.

Members are allowed to borrow two MP3s – or four CDs, which are sent in the post – at a time, from the charity's collection of more than 10,000 audiobooks.

When we tested the service, 33 of the titles (66%) in our list were available to borrow – far more than our local library alone could supply.



▲ *Helen Boaden is keen to see the independent service Spiracle succeed*

## Free reading
### How to get audiobooks at no cost

**If your top priority is to pay as little as possible, we found that borrowing them for free from your local library using BorrowBox, uLibrary or Libby is by far your best and cheapest option. Your library may allow you to access all three using your library card.**

**Most of the audiobooks Beth Leitch consumes each month are loaned from her local library. However, she says the titles she wants to read are not always immediately available.**

**Eight of the titles on our list – all classics, including The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway and The Great Gatsby by F Scott Fitzgerald – were also free to download from LibriVox. This free resource hosts recordings of books, often narrated by volunteers, that were typically published more than 95 years ago and so are now out of copyright and in the public domain in the US.**

**However, as the site itself makes clear, some of these classic texts may still be protected by copyright law outside the US, and it is the responsibility of each individual listener to determine this and comply with local laws. In the UK, copyright protection for published works now usually lasts for 70 years after the author's death.**

**The good news is that if you are a BBC licence fee payer, the radio programmes available from BBC Sounds are a fantastic source of free audiobooks and short stories – which you can legally consume to your heart's content.**

**Overall, via the BBC, LibriVox and our local library, we found we could legally access 25 different books for free – half the titles we randomly decided we wanted to listen to.**

# Overdrafts

# 'I received an £8,000 payout after I complained'

People struggling with debt for years could get redress if their bank failed to make the right affordability checks, writes **Jess Clark**

A woman who was struggling with debt has received an £8,000 payout from a high street bank after making a complaint about her overdraft. Now thousands of other borrowers could be in line for refunds.

Laura (she did not wish to give her surname) was £30,000 in debt, with £9,000 of that in overdrafts, and struggling to make ends meet when she searched online for a solution.

The 30-year-old had been living on her overdraft for a decade, and other debts – including credit cards and high-cost loans – had spiralled during a financially abusive relationship in her 20s.

After that ended a few years ago, she was left with the mountain of debt and, despite a successful career as a fashion merchandiser, she was barely able to meet her minimum payments, leaving her at "rock bottom".

"I had struggled with it over the years, keeping it quietly to myself," she says.

"Last year, when everybody was impacted with the cost of living crisis, interest rates and bills going up, it got to the point where I couldn't borrow from Peter to pay Paul any more.

"All of my salary was going on debt payments, but it wasn't even reducing it – it was just interest, interest, interest."

Her search for solutions led her to Debt Camel, a personal finance website run by Sara Williams, where she learned it may be possible to get interest and fees refunded if a bank has given you an overdraft you cannot afford.

Laura made a complaint to Barclays in January this year and within weeks had been refunded £8,000, covering fees and interest accrued over a six-year period. The bank says this was done "as a gesture of goodwill".

It is possible to complain about older charges, but that involves going to the Financial Ombudsman Service, which can be a longer process, so Laura decided she was happy with the amount offered by Barclays.

Thousands of "hardcore borrowers" could also be owed




▲ *Barclays refunded charges after a customer at 'rock bottom' complained*

refunds after being trapped in unaffordable overdrafts for years.

"Hardcore borrowing" is a banking industry term that means "the position where a customer's current account overdraft remains persistently overdrawn for more than a month without returning to credit during that period".

"It had been a chain around my neck for the best part of 10 years," Laura says. "When I got that call from Barclays ... the weight lifted."

Other steps, including speaking to her bank to get interest frozen, and selling her car, have helped reduce her debt from £30,000 to £2,600 since the end of last year, and she anticipates being debt-free by the end of 2023.

Barclays tells us: "We are sorry our customer has had cause to complain. After investigating the charges that had been applied to their accounts, we determined that they were applied correctly, in line with our terms and conditions.

"However, in order to help with the customer's financial situation, we offered to refund the charges as a gesture of goodwill."

It added that the bank had "robust processes for verifying a customer's credit history and affordability when they apply for a consumer credit product".

## How to get fees refunded

**Banks have a responsibility to make sure they don't approve, or extend, overdrafts for customers in financial difficulty.**

**Most terms and conditions say lenders should review a customer's overdraft annually and offer help if needed. Gambling transactions, debts with other lenders, or bouncing direct debits or standing orders, could signal problems.**

**Consumers may be able to get interest and charges refunded by making an overdraft affordability complaint. First complain to your bank. The Debt Camel website features a helpful guide on how to do this, as well as a template letter.**

**The bank has eight weeks to respond. If it rejects your claim or makes a poor offer, you have six months to escalate it to the Financial Ombudsman Service for free, which you can do online.**

**It decides whether the bank's decision was correct, or if it should compensate you.**

## Consumer champions
**Zoe Wood**



### SSE prepay pain and distressing Ovo demands

**I have a serious issue with SSE Energy. Every time I top up my prepayment meter, it puts 70% of the money towards the debt on my account.**

**Over four days, the company has taken £77 out of £110 of top-ups. I'm a single mum with two children and can't afford repayments at this level, but no one will listen. I have had some financial difficulties and owe it about £1,000.**

**Over a year ago, it installed the prepayment meter and everything was going OK until Friday 21 April.**

**I had used all my emergency credit, so topped up my gas with £40. Out of the blue, it took £28 towards my debt and gave me a £12 gas credit.**

**On the Sunday I put another £30 on the meter. Again, £21 went to debt and £9 towards gas.**

**The next day, I called the helpline and was told I would not be charged this rate when I next topped up. So I loaded on another £40 but again £28 went towards debt, leaving £12 for gas.**

**Realising that 70% of my money was going on debt repayments, I called to explain that it was too much, and was told 70% was the standard rate.**

**I explained, again, that I could not afford to pay that much. I also asked if I could benefit from the government's breathing space scheme.**

**After asking to speak to a manager, I got a call back that evening and was advised to top up with £10 to allow the 70% to be taken, as it was a weekly rate.**

**When I told her I got charged 70% every time, she promised to look into it and to call back within 24 hours. Two days on, and I have not heard anything.**

**I work as a freelance and am on universal credit. I also suffer from clinical depression.**

**SSE has all this information.**
**SL,** *London*

**My 95-year-old cousin JF has been receiving payment demands from Ovo Energy since January. This is very distressing, and she is worried it could lead to bailiffs breaking into her flat to install a prepayment meter.**

**She has never been an Ovo customer. Her supplier is Octopus Energy. She has tried writing to the company and returning the letters.**

**I contacted it via web chat and it told me to send the letters back. I also tried calling but got cut off without a resolution.**

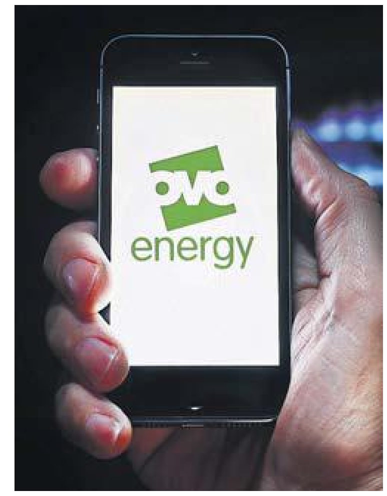
**I am at a loss as to what to do next. And the letters still keep on coming.**
**JK,** *Cardiff*

This week's column is devoted to Ovo Energy (it bought SSE's retail arm in 2020) after it managed to stand out in an inbox full of complaints about energy companies.

At a time when the industry's use of prepayment meters is under fierce scrutiny, the rate of clawback on **SL**'s debt was concerning. Not least because Ovo was one of the companies that gave pay-as-you-go customers a debt recovery "holiday" during the winter months.

The collection of debt is managed by the "debt recovery rate", or DRR, set on the meter.

There is no industry standard for this; however, all energy firms must consider the customer's




▲ *Ovo, which bought SSE's retail arm, attracted a string of complaints*

ability to pay and set the DRR accordingly.

Being charged at this level is clearly not sustainable, and the advice given by Ovo's call handlers has been confusing at best.

We asked Ovo to look into the matter urgently and, after investigating, it told us the DRR had been incorrectly inputted on its system. This has now been rectified, and a £49 credit applied to your account.

You have also accepted an £80 goodwill gesture.

The company has now discussed debt repayment options with you and referred you to its vulnerability team for support.

You mentioned breathing space (sometimes called the debt respite scheme), which can give you up to 60 days' space from creditors to focus on getting debt advice and setting up a debt solution.

It is not a payment holiday; however, it would prevent action being taken against you if you're unable to pay.

Meanwhile, poor **JF** has received 10 letters - and counting - demanding payment for a rogue Ovo account. The most recent letter says the debt has reached almost £600.

The company has looked into this, too, and tells us the flat address was incorrectly logged on the national database.

It has apologised, and insists the error has been put right. This should stop the letters. If any more arrive, return them to sender.

*We welcome letters but cannot answer individually. Email us at consumer.champions@theguardian.com or write to Consumer Champions, Money, the Guardian, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU. Please include a daytime phone number. Submission and publication of all letters is subject to our terms and conditions: http://theguardian.com/letters-terms*




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ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE WIGNALL

# Money hacks How to get a bargain at charity shops

Amanda Hall-Davis

## Stick to a budget

Gone are the days of rummaging through musty, moth-eaten piles, as charity shops are now scoring high on the retail landscape of favourable places to shop and snap up a great deal.

More than three-quarters of people in the UK are shifting towards preloved goods to save money, according to figures from SQLI Digital Experience.

As Maike Currie, the head of content at Hargreaves Lansdown, says, with inflation still in double figures, our monthly budget is very much front of mind. "And browsing the local charity shop benefits the planet and our pockets," she adds.

It's essential to stick to a budget, and the first step to ensuring you don't overspend is to decide how much you can realistically spare.

Once you have a final list of what you need you can determine how much money to allocate to your thrifting hunt.

## Timing is vital

Choosing the right time to grab a bargain can work in your favour.

While there's no perfect day, some swear by going in early on a Monday or Tuesday. Employees tend to restock earlier in the week, as at the weekends the shops are often more crowded.

"I think that, generally, people tend to clear out unused items, or declutter, over the weekend, and I figure that they would drop them off on Sunday or early Monday," says Jane De Ste Croix, an educational psychologist. She is a regular charity shopper, who sets herself a budget of £20 maximum for her two-weekly shopping expeditions.

And, as most charity shops will be restocked on a regular basis, it's always worth trying to visit as often as you can in order to give yourself the best chance of snapping up those top bargains.

## All in the label

Keep an eye out for items where labels have been cut off.

Some big retailers have deals with charity shops to donate stock that hasn't been sold, which may include designer brands.

With clothing, some may argue that dry clean-only items aren't the best thing to go for, as the cost of getting the garment cleaned may well defeat the purpose of saving you cash.

Rooting through both men's and women's items is definitely worthwhile, so forget what the label says. If you think a garment may suit you or a family member, then go for it.

## Check out the items

It's worth taking your time to really root around, as hidden treasures can be unearthed that nobody else has spotted but it takes patience and some skill.

However, pay close attention to sizing, quality and any damage such as cracks or broken zips, as the repair costs could add up.

## Location, location

Shopping locally can give you the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the type of items donated, and you can talk to staff about when they restock so you can plan your timing to get there first and snap up the best bargains.

Thrift shopping in affluent areas can come with hefty price tags, although the choice may include unused or high-end items.

And scoping out different areas can pay off for new finds.

## Volunteer

Becoming a volunteer at your local charity shop has its perks: not only are you supporting a good cause you are interested in, but you may also be able to browse through new donations before they hit the shop floor.

You may even be offered a staff discount and get to know when some stores organise things such as upcycling events, where heavily discounted recycled furniture is on offer.

> *'Browsing a charity shop benefits the planet and our pocket'*
>
> **Maike Currie**
> *Hargreaves Lansdown*

## Head online

"Charity shops are constantly working to reach new audiences, whether that's through selling online, social media or marketing," says Robin Osterley, chief executive of the Charity Retail Association, the primary membership association for charity shops in the UK.

Some offer online services, so you can check out preloved goods without leaving your house. It can be a real time saver, with zero rummaging, as you can refine any searches, and many charities will upload new stock or individual items on to their website as soon as they arrive.

It is also worthwhile following your favourite charity shops on Instagram, Twitter or Facebook, or setting up social media alerts so you are the first to know about new or used items for sale, events or discounts.

The auction site eBay has a dedicated page called eBay for Charity, where you can hunt down preloved bargains offered by the likes of Cancer Research UK, Barnardo's and the British Heart Foundation, among others.

## Sustainable option

Buying secondhand has lots of advantages. It reduces the number of unwanted items that end up in landfill, and you are donating to a worthwhile cause that needs continued funding. And, of course, it means you are saving money.

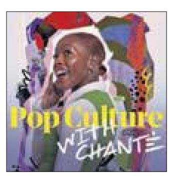
Hannah Coventry, head of retail at the Air Ambulance Service, says: "The average charity retail price for a preloved item is just a fifth of the recommended retail price in a high street store."

She also says that buying used, instead of new, can have a huge impact in terms of reducing $CO_2$ emissions.




The Guardian Podcasts

Fresh takes on new trends




Chanté Joseph returns to Pop Culture with more fresh takes on the latest entertaining, shocking and quite frankly baffling pop culture moments shaping our lives. Tune in for more special guests and sharp-witted analysis.

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**◀ Ridgeway, Newport**
**£1.5m**
The image conjured up by "suburbs" probably doesn't resemble this Grade II-listed Jacobean mansion in Wales. So striking is its gothic appearance that Fields House has starred in Sherlock and Doctor Who. There are five bedrooms, four bathrooms and a wine cellar. It has been renovated but original features remain, such as oak floors, sash windows and a bell system to call the household for dinner. Even the most discerning Victorian detective would approve of the study, with its blue panelling and mezzanine library. *Mr and Mrs Clarke, 07884 231 242*



# Fantasy house hunt
# Homes in the super suburbs

**Compiled by Anna White**

**▶ Bridge of Don, Aberdeen**
**£750,000**
Six-bedroom, three-bathroom Glenseaton Lodge has artistic connections. In the 1860s the owner commissioned the pre-Raphaelite stained-glass window artist Daniel Cottier (his work can also be seen in nearby St Machar's Cathedral) to design and build the main drawing room and dining room. The latter has a vaulted cedar ceiling and ecclesiastical-shaped windows – a theme that runs through the downstairs – and the original marble fireplace. Its 1.2 hectares (3 acres) of land are bordered by the River Don. *Strutt & Parker, 01738 503 266*



**▲ Surbiton, London**
**£394,000**
This area was put on the map in the 1970s sitcom The Good Life, as the sleepy suburb where a couple become urban farmers and disrupt the equilibrium by rearing livestock in the garden. It is now a popular retreat for Londoners wishing to upsize. However, this one-bedroom second-floor apartment may appeal to first-time buyers. It is a few minutes' walk from Surbiton station. *Savills, 01372 461 900*

**▼ Ashtead, Surrey**
**£950,000**
This village is in Surrey's Mole Valley between Epsom and Leatherhead. On a no-through-road crescent of largely 1970s properties is this single-storey home with a striking mono-pitched roof. The interior is split, with living areas on one side and four bedrooms on the other. It is within walking distance of the bustling high street but has a peaceful south-facing garden. *The Modern House, 020 3795 5920*



**◀ Wollaton, Nottingham**
**£775,000**
This is a popular and leafy, largely residential, area with wide avenues (and big price tags) sitting opposite the Queen's Medical Centre (a teaching hospital and home to the University of Nottingham's medical school). The suburb is also known for Wollaton Park, with its Grade I-listed Elizabethan hall and 200 hectares (500 acres) of deer-inhabited grounds used for open-air concerts, exhibitions or simply walking the dog. Sitting within a stone-walled garden is this period property with four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a panelled hallway, original oak floors and a garage. *Savills, 0115 934 8109*



# Health and Wellbeing checklist ☑

Your body is precious and it pays to look after yourself.
Here are a variety of ideas to be – and stay – healthy

Read more online! Visit *checklists.co.uk* and follow @checklistsocial




## Confidence in heartburn control

Heartburn is a common condition affecting up to one in four adults in the UK[1].

For some it's an occasional nuisance, for others it can be a regular problem which interrupts day-to-day life.

Pyrocalm Control 20mg Gastro-Resistant Tablets is the first branded omeprazole 20mg available over the counter without a prescription. It provides up to 24-hour confidence in heartburn control.

**Visit website *pyrocalmcontrol.co.uk***

1. Heartburn and acid reflux (NHS, 2020). For the short-term treatment of reflux symptoms in adults. Always read the label.

## Where luxury meets affordability

Signature Clinic

At Signature Clinic, they offer a variety of procedures in cosmetic dentistry to help you achieve the perfect smile, including porcelain veneers, composite veneers, dental implants, Invisalign, and teeth whitening.

The clinic provides exceptional care and service in every aspect of its business, from consultation to aftercare. Every patient is provided with complimentary out-of-hours aftercare. Their patient promise is to be at the clinic within 60 minutes of your emergency if necessary.

Patients will receive a thorough treatment plan at an affordable price, with no hidden costs or obligations. Free virtual consultations are provided to all customers at all of their UK locations, with no high-pressure sales methods, enabling patients to take as much time as they need and contact them when ready.



**To book your free virtual consultation, contact 0141 255 2737 or visit *signatureclinic.co.uk* to find out more.**

## World-class care, expertly tailored to you

Cromwell Hospital are world leaders in private healthcare. Since 1981, they have delivered exceptional care from their state-of-the-art hospital in Kensington, central London.

They offer some of the most technologically advanced treatments and facilities, including their Integrated Cancer Campus and dedicated Heart and Lung Centre, and all under one roof.

With rapid access to diagnostics and treatment, their world-leading consultants are here to support you with personalised treatment plans.






They work with most private medical insurance companies and offer a range of self-pay options, meaning their services have never been more accessible.

For more than 40 years, they have cared for patients and their loved ones from across London and the UK. At Cromwell Hospital, they deliver world-class care, expertly tailored to you.

**Visit *cromwellhospital.com/yourhealth* for more information.**

Cromwell Hospital

## Win three pairs of Arch Angel insoles

*Worth £75!*

Enter here
**checklists.co.uk/win/healthystep**

**Heavenly support for fallen arches**

HealthyStep® design innovative orthotics, insoles and associated products for the effective relief of foot and lower limb conditions. The team includes several clinically experienced and highly regarded podiatrists which means they can provide the advice, support and product innovation they need to do their job. They have supplied over 250,000 pairs of X-Line insoles into the NHS and private podiatry practices in the UK.

The X-Line insole has been developed to improve your foot's function and relieve the symptoms of foot fatigue when you are active, helping you to enjoy longer walks which are so important to keep you in good health. The uniquely contoured design has been developed by their in-house podiatrist to provide support and comfort in most shoes. Quality is guaranteed with these CE-marked Class 1 Medical Devices. The X-Line insoles are £15.95 per pair or £27.90 for two pairs including free post and packaging on all orders.




x line

Based on the success of their other X-Line models, Healthy Step decided to develop the ArchAngel insole to provide the best comfort and arch support for feet with fallen arches. Many people with fallen arches suffer from fatigue and general aches that develop as a result of the concave shape of the middle of the foot that flattens excessively during walking and running. Providing heavenly support for fallen arches, ArchAngel insoles cradle the foot to help make your walks a healthy pleasure again. They are priced at £29.95 per pair and you can get your second pair for £22.95.

Arch Angel




HealthyStep
foot health innovation

**Visit *healthystep.co.uk* to shop the range online.**

## Nuasan – formulated for everyday aches

nuasan

The bestselling Nuasan Active CBD Muscle Gel contains 500mg high-strength CBD formulated with everyday aches in mind. This high-performing gel also contains a unique blend of plant extracts to melt away tightness and tension and chilli extract to give instant, warming relief. From athletes to amateurs, nurses, builders, gardeners, and everyone else – Nuasan can help.

Developed for athletes but loved by everyone, Nuasan is a range of natural body and skin care products that have been developed for active people to soothe aches and refresh body and skin.

Being active is so important for wellbeing, both physical and mental, and Nuasan are passionate about creating natural products that keep you moving and feeling great!




**Visit *nuasan.com* and use code CHECKLIST10 to enjoy a 10% discount on their entire range this weekend!**

## Win an outdoor rollator

*Worth over £850!*

Enter here
**checklists.co.uk/win/trionic2**

The Veloped Tour from Trionic is perfect for taking a stroll in the park, for going shopping and for everyday activities.

The Veloped can overtake curbs, rocks, roots and other obstacles without losing ground contact. The sturdy design and air-filled tyres minimise vibrations and offer a smoother ride on gravel, grass, cobblestone and forest tracks.

Treat yourself or a loved one to one of the most reliable walking aids on the market!

TRIONIC



**Visit *trionic.uk* to shop online. Follow *@veloped* and *@trionicveloped* or call 0330 818 2145 to find out more.**

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## Extensive health benefits of regular sauna use

FINNMARK
AUTHENTIC SAUNA EXPERIENCES

As recently seen across the media, there has been a myriad of research published around the potential health benefits of saunas.

One of the largest long-term studies on regular sauna bathing for the prevention of cardiovascular disease and Alzheimer's disease was led by Dr Jari Laukkanen, cardiologist and researcher at the University of Eastern Finland. The study involved more than 2,300 middle-aged Finnish men and took place over a period of 20 years. It found that participants that used a sauna two to three times a week were potentially less likely to die from causes related to cardiovascular health in comparison to the men who didn't use a sauna[1]. Another benefit noted was the potential to decrease risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia[2] in some participants.





Other potential health benefits of regular sauna bathing are the possibility of stress reduction and improved sleep[3]. A global sauna survey in 2019 found that individuals self-reported sauna use as an aid to relaxation, stress reduction and relieving discomfort.

Having a 20-minute sauna session three times a week can potentially improve your health significantly and contribute towards protection from common diseases[4]. If you want sauna to be part of your health-focused lifestyle, Finnmark Sauna offer a range of sauna options varying from modular outdoor saunas, barrel saunas and premium bespoke saunas.

**For more information, visit *finnmarksauna.com* or call 020 8050 2895.**

1. Association Between Sauna Bathing and Fatal Cardiovascular and All-Cause Mortality Events, Tanjaniina Laukkanen et al.
2. Sauna bathing is inversely associated with dementia and Alzheimer's disease in middle-aged Finnish men, Tanjaniina Laukkanen et al.
3. A hot topic for health: Results of the Global Sauna Survey, Joy N Hussain et al.
4. Clinical Effects of Regular Dry Sauna Bathing: A Systematic Review, Joy N Hussain, Marc Cohen.

## Global healthcare provider specialising in IVF launches in the UK






Acibadem, a global healthcare leader and part of the world's second largest healthcare network, has launched its first UK information office to bring its world class IVF and fertility treatments to British patients for the first time.

**An average of 20,000 happy couples every year**

The launch of its first UK information office, located in west London, makes it possible for people in the UK to access Acibadem's world-leading specialists and state-of-the-art medical technology.

Acibadem offers state-of-the-art IVF and fertility treatments that have resulted in 20,000 happy couples every year. Acibadem's success rates exceed NHS averages across all age groups, while offering cutting-edge assisted reproductive technologies and leading medical experts at a lower price point than private UK-based companies.





**Setting the gold standard for private healthcare**

In 2012, Acibadem signed into a joint partnership with IHH Healthcare, making it part of the world's second largest healthcare chain. Five Acibadem Hospitals are accredited by Joint Commission International (JCI), the international gold standard for quality and patient safety. Acibadem raises the bar for patient care with a full suite of integrated healthcare services by combining leading experts and technology with the contemporary sophistication of a five-star hotel.

**Start your IVF journey today**

Acibadem's Health Point Programme ensures that medical professionals are on hand to lead you through every step of the journey – from applying for your first consultation and scheduling your healthcare journey to accompanying you as you travel to Acibadem's state-of-the-art medical facilities.

ACIBADEM
A CLASS HEALTHCARE SERVICES

**For more information and to book your appointment visit *acibademinternational.com* or visit the new Health Point office at 68 Great Portland St, London, W1W 7NG. Contact the team by phone on 020 7323 6665 or email *london@acibadem.com***

## Say hello to a radiant, sun-kissed glow




Are you tired of uneven, patchy self-tanners? Look no further than Watermans Browned Off. Their fake tanning range combines luxury tanning with skin hydration, thanks to the inclusion of aloe vera. Their fake tan range is specifically formulated with a no-biscuit smell, to ensure a natural-looking, streak-free finish every time, leaving you with a beautiful golden tan without the harmful UV rays. And because it is infused with aloe vera, your skin will feel hydrated and nourished.

They take pride in using the highest quality ingredients to ensure their products are safe for all skin types. Their fake tans are paraben free, sulphate free, cruelty free and vegan friendly. They are easy to apply and dry quickly, so you can go about your day without having to wait around for it to dry. And with a variety of shades to choose from, you're sure to find the perfect one to match your skin tone.

THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: INTERNATIONAL TRADE 2022

WATERMANS

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**Phone the team on 0330 580 1153 or visit *livingroom.health* to find out more.**

1. The Rising Prevalence of Chronic Low Back Pain, by Janet K Freburger et al. *Terms and conditions apply. Offer of 20% off available up to 31 May 2023.




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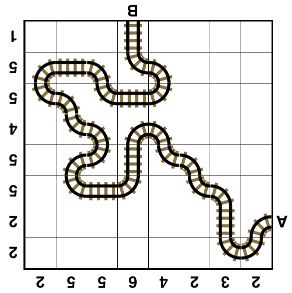
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# Puzzles

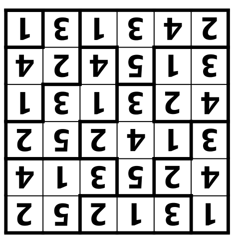
## Solutions



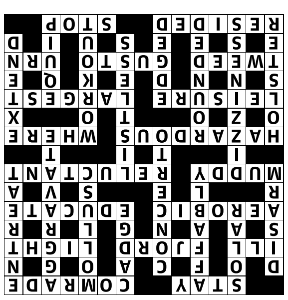
Train tracks

Word wheel

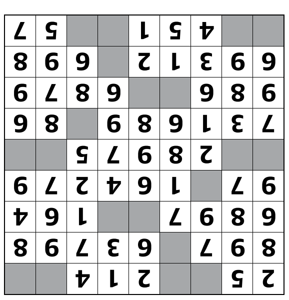
ANNOUNCER



Suguru



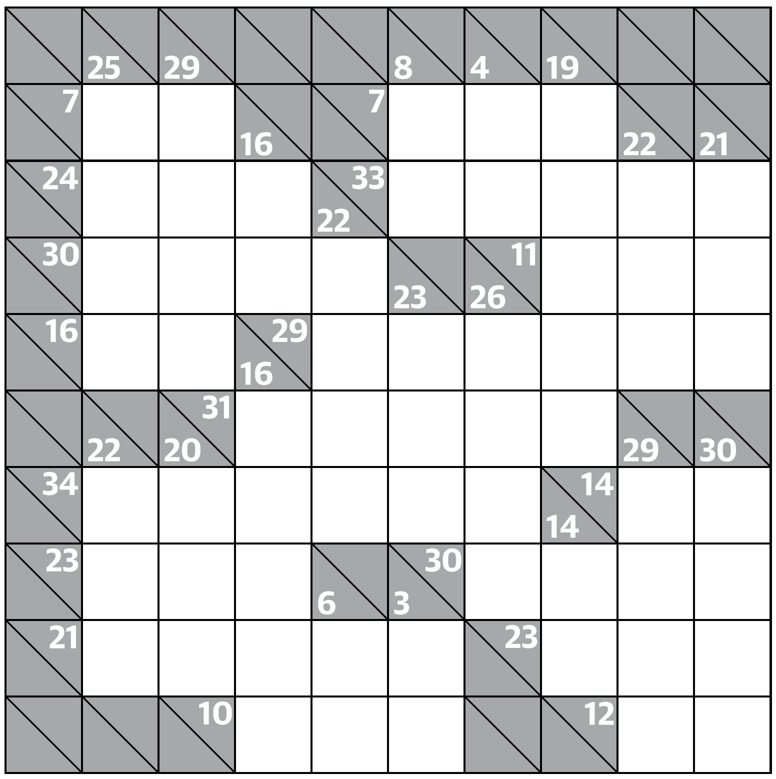
Codeword



Kakuro

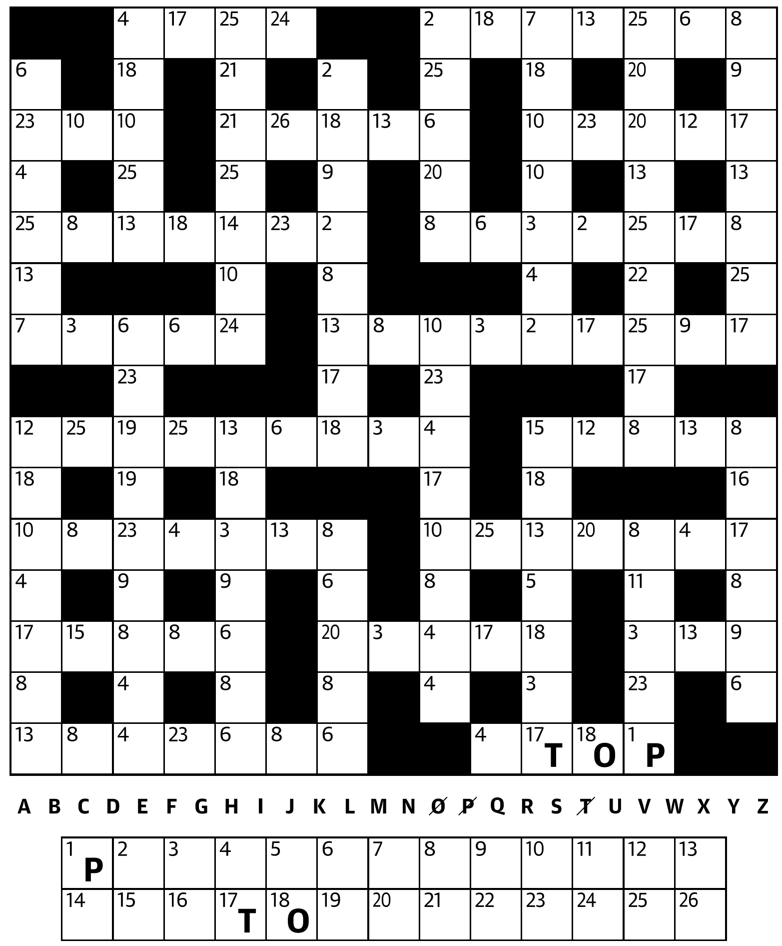
## Kakuro

*Fill the grid so that each block adds up to the total in the box above or to the left of it. You can only use the digits 1-9 and you must not use the same number twice in a block.*



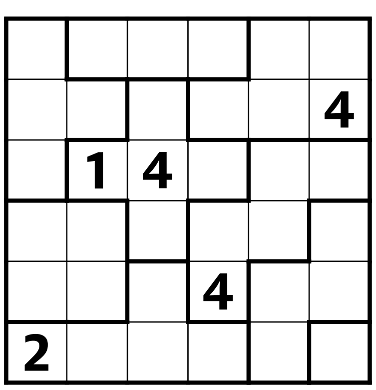
## Codeword

*Crack the code to fill in the crossword grid. Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. A number of letters have been decoded to help with the identification of other letters and words in the grid.*



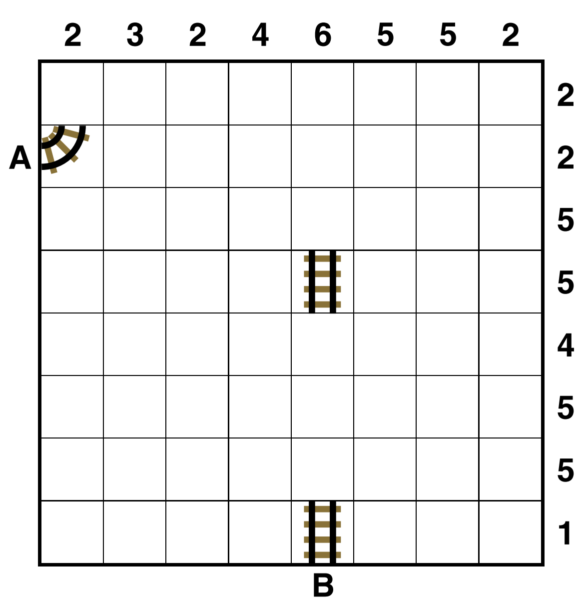
## Suguru

*Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.*



## Train tracks

*Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each row and column. There are only straight rails and curved rails. The track cannot cross itself.*



**Time on your hands?**

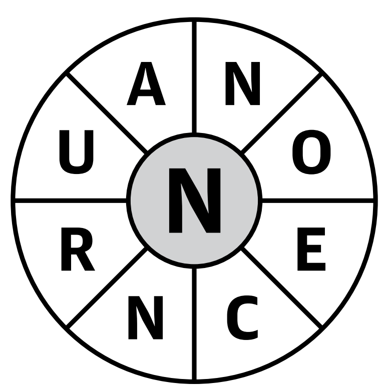
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## Word wheel

*Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. Target: excellent 32, good 27, average 20.*

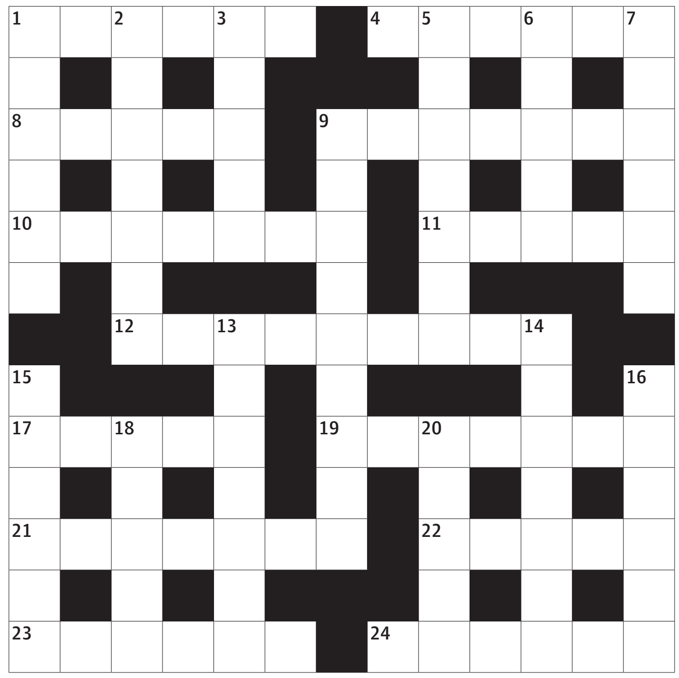


# Puzzles

## Quick crossword no 16,542

**Across**
1 Martial art (4,2)
4 Clear and bright (6)
8 Not as many (5)
9 Small vegetable, pickled whole (7)
10 State of heightened activity (7)
11 Iconic mental representation (sometimes spitting?) (5)
12 Excessively critical person (3-6)
17 Manufacturer (5)
19 To be played quickly and with liveliness (7)
21 Merciful – net line (anag) (7)
22 Adjust a little bit (5)
23 To tape (anag) (6)
24 Elegant and formal (6)

**Down**
1 Garment with sleeves reaching down to the ankles, worn by men in the Middle East (6)
2 Stevenage, Crawley or Hatfield, for example (3,4)
3 School classes (5)
5 Pointed tool (which killed Trotsky) (3,4)
6 Indian word for proper or genuine (5)
7 US Democrat Party symbol (6)
9 Gad about (9)
13 Underwater weapon (7)
14 Go backwards (7)
15 Talisman (6)
16 Game played with sticks (6)
18 African country, independent since 1963, with Swahili and English as its official languages (5)
20 Afterwards (5)



## Yesterday's
Quick crossword

**Solution no 16,541**

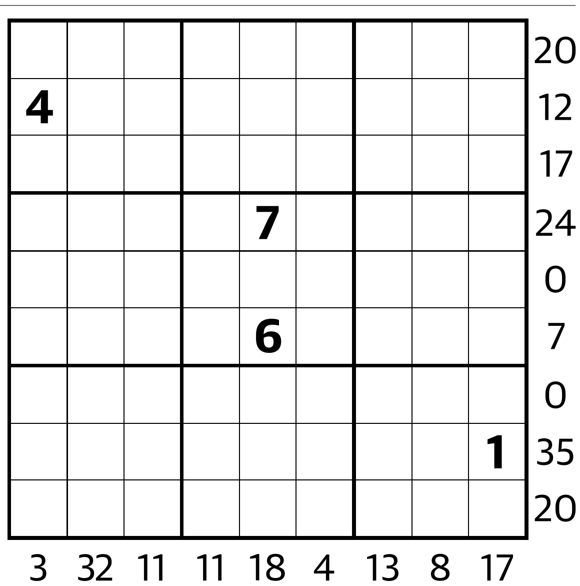
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | M | A | H | A | R | A | J | A | H |
| Y | ■ | V | ■ | A | ■ | Y | ■ | O | ■ | U | ■ | A |
| O | D | E | O | N | ■ | P | O | P | U | L | A | R |
| U | ■ | N | ■ | D | ■ | H | ■ | E | ■ | I | ■ | D |
| R | E | U | N | I | T | E | D | ■ | P | U | S | S |
| E | ■ | S | ■ | B | ■ | N | ■ | S | ■ | S | ■ | H |
| W | A | F | F | L | E | ■ | P | O | N | C | H | O |
| E | ■ | L | ■ | E | ■ | P | ■ | M | ■ | A | ■ | U |
| L | A | Y | S | ■ | B | L | U | E | B | E | L | L |
| C | ■ | T | ■ | A | ■ | U | ■ | W | ■ | S | ■ | D |
| O | A | R | S | M | A | N | ■ | H | E | A | V | E |
| M | ■ | A | ■ | I | ■ | G | ■ | A | ■ | R | ■ | R |
| E | X | P | E | D | I | E | N | T | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |

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## Sandwich sudoku

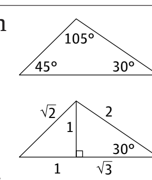
**Medium**

*Place the digits from 1-9 in each row, column and 3x3 block. The clues outside the grid show the sum of the numbers placed between the 1 and 9 in that row or column.*




## Chris Maslanka
Solutions

**Pyrgic: 1.** A series starts at a point and continues for a duration. As for the killer, we could all commit more murders. What they were trying to say was: "Police think he might have committed more murders." With thanks to Jim Cownie for spotting this. **2.** 7 × (10C + D) = 70C + 7D = 100C + D; so 30C = 6D, which boils down to D = 5C. But C and D are digits; so (C, D) = (1, 5), and CD = 15. **Point to ponder** What *other* digit, d, instead of 7 could have been used to produce a puzzle of the same form? That is d × CD = COD, where d ≠ 7? What would CD be then? **3.** 2 + 3 + 7 = 12; so the angles are [(2/12), (3/12), (7/12)] × 180º = (30º, 45º, 105º). This makes it a special triangle; well, two special triangles welded together: a right-angled isosceles triangle (half a square) and half an equilateral triangle. The other slant side is accordingly $\sqrt{(1^2 + 1^2)} = \sqrt{2}$ and the base of the right-hand triangle is $\sqrt{(2^2 - 1^2)} = \sqrt{3}$; so the whole base is $(1 + \sqrt{3})$. The area is $(1 + \sqrt{3})/2$. It can be useful to distinguish a special case from a general one. A scalene triangle has 3 different sides, 3 different angles and no line of symmetry (no rotational or point symmetry). **Point to ponder** Are these properties *independent*? **4.** If the average number of goes is n, then n = p(1) + (1 - p)(n + 1) = 1/p. In this case p = ¼ so n = 4. Chances game lasts 4 goes = $(3/4)^3 \times (1/4) = 27/256$. Chances it lasts *at least* 4 goes are $(3/4)^3$. **5.** 370. [$2^3 = 8$; $8^3 = 512$; but 134 is *not* $512^3$. It is, however, $5^3 + 1^3 + 2^3$; further, $1^3 + 3^3 + 4^3 = 92$, and $9^3 + 2^3 = 737$. Then $7^3 + 3^3 + 7^3 = 370$. And then?]




**Horse of Conniption:** Pyrgic Puzzle #3 last week: Congratulations to those readers unfazed by my quoting areas in $cm^3$ (what was I thinking?) who, having espied the pretty puzzle this blemish obscured, leapfrogged the obstacle and went on to solve what was intended.
**Wordplay:** Wordpool b), c), a);
**EPU** CONCENTRATION;
**Dropouts** BILTONG; **Word Centre** FLAMBOYANCE [ANTIBOYCOTT];
**Cryptic** RAINBOW; **Missing Links** a) high/tea/tray, b) moon/light/fingered, c) cocktail/cabinet/maker, d) clock/face/paint, e) shopping/trolley/bus, f) reap/praise/worthy.



# Polly Toynbee: My family and other radicals

The Guardian Live

**Join Guardian columnist Polly Toynbee in conversation with Guardian chief culture writer Charlotte Higgins at this livestreamed event.**

Coming from a long line of radicals and reformers, Toynbee has wrestled with the contradictions of being middle class while championing socialism. In this event, she'll be discussing her new book, An Uneasy Inheritance, and what it reveals about social mobility in Britain today.

***Wednesday 31 May 8pm-9pm***

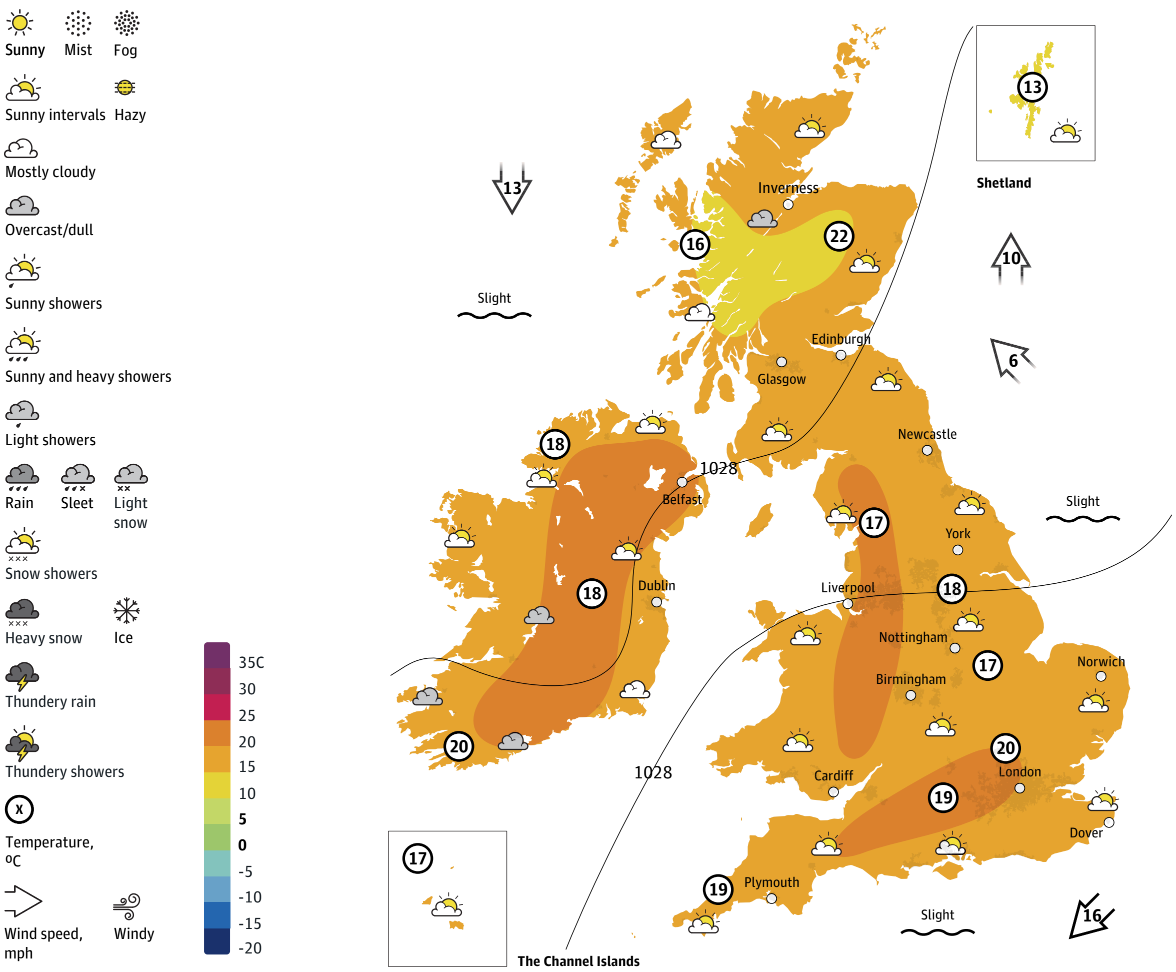
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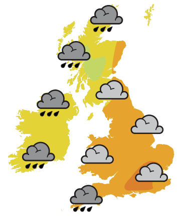
# Weather
*Saturday 13 May 2023*

## UK and Ireland Noon today

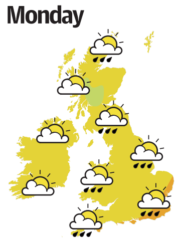



## Forecast

Low 8 High 18
**Tomorrow**



Low 8 High 12
**Monday**



## Carbon count

Daily atmospheric $CO_2$ readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

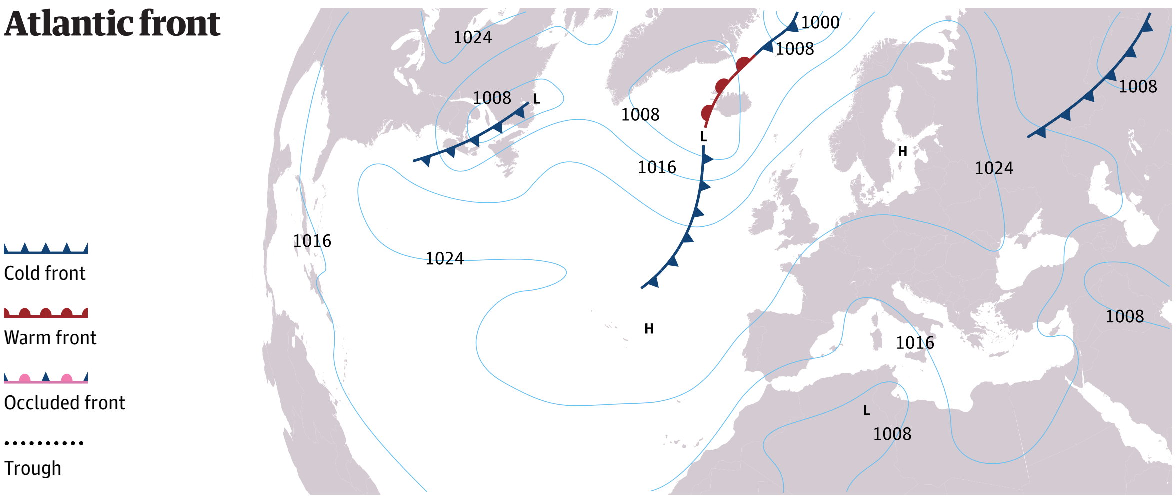
| | |
|---|---|
| *Latest* | |
| 09 May 2023 | 424.17 |
| *Weekly average* | |
| 30 Apr 2023 | 424.45 |
| 12 May 2022 | 420.18 |
| 12 May 2013 | 399.74 |
| *Pre-industrial base* | *280* |
| *Safe level* | *350* |

Source: NOAA-ESRL

## Around the UK

| | Lows and highs (low) | Lows and highs (high) | Precipitation | Air pollution |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **London** | 7 | 20 | 0% | Low |
| **Manchester** | 8 | 20 | 0% | Low |
| **Edinburgh** | 7 | 18 | 0% | Low |
| **Belfast** | 10 | 20 | 0% | Low |
| **Birmingham** | 7 | 18 | 5% | Low |
| **Brighton** | 8 | 19 | 5% | Low |
| **Bristol** | 9 | 18 | 0% | Low |
| **Cardiff** | 10 | 19 | 5% | Low |
| **Newcastle** | 6 | 17 | 0% | Low |
| **Penzance** | 11 | 16 | 0% | Low |

## Atlantic front




## Weather tracker

May is the end of the rainy season for many parts of east Africa. However, this does not mean the devastation has ended. Heavy rainfall last week, which started in the late afternoon of 2 May, led to flash flooding in parts of Rwanda and Uganda. These downpours continued until 4 May, with further wet weather later in the week.

This rainfall caused Rwanda's Sebeya River to burst its banks and also destabilised slopes. There were several landslides across hilly regions, with official reports counting 127 deaths, 5,100 properties destroyed, and a further 2,500 damaged. Parts of Uganda were also affected by flash floods, with six reported deaths linked to a landslide.

Heavy rain also hit coastal areas of west Africa earlier this week. Several storms affected northern parts of Sierra Leone on Tuesday and Wednesday, leading to some flash flooding. The capital, Freetown, was one of the worst-affected areas, with several cars washed away in the deluge and buildings badly damaged. Six deaths were linked to a wall collapse, and a further 10 deaths were reported in connection with a landslide where a house collapsed.

**Faye Hulton** *MetDesk*

## Around the world

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Algiers | 19 | Lisbon | 24 |
| Ams'dam | 21 | Madrid | 20 |
| Athens | 21 | Malaga | 21 |
| Auckland | 17 | Melb'rne | 17 |
| B Aires | 22 | Mexico C | 26 |
| Bangkok | 35 | Miami | 30 |
| Barcelona | 19 | Milan | 19 |
| Basra | 44 | Mombasa | 30 |
| Beijing | 29 | Moscow | 21 |
| Berlin | 22 | Mumbai | 34 |
| Bermuda | 22 | N Orleans | 30 |
| Brussels | 21 | Nairobi | 26 |
| Budapest | 16 | New Delhi | 42 |
| C'hagen | 20 | New York | 26 |
| Cairo | 29 | Oslo | 20 |
| Cape Town | 19 | Paris | 20 |
| Chicago | 22 | Perth | 20 |
| Corfu | 20 | Prague | 15 |
| Dakar | 27 | Reykjavik | 9 |
| Dhaka | 37 | Rio de J | 23 |
| Dublin | 17 | Rome | 20 |
| Florence | 20 | Shanghai | 30 |
| Gibraltar | 22 | Singapore | 34 |
| H Kong | 25 | Stockh'm | 22 |
| Harare | 25 | Strasb'g | 18 |
| Helsinki | 22 | Sydney | 20 |
| Istanbul | 18 | Tel Aviv | 23 |
| Jo'burg | 21 | Tenerife | 24 |
| K Lumpur | 33 | Tokyo | 17 |
| K'mandu | 31 | Toronto | 23 |
| Kabul | 24 | Vancouv'r | 23 |
| Kingston | 32 | Vienna | 14 |
| Kolkata | 37 | Warsaw | 22 |
| L Angeles | 25 | Wash'ton | 21 |
| Lagos | 32 | Well'ton | 15 |
| Lima | 23 | Zurich | 16 |

## High tides

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Aberdeen** | 0817 | 3.5m | 2129 | 3.5m |
| **Avonmouth** | 0129 | 10.4m | 1417 | 10.1m |
| **Barrow** | 0613 | 7.7m | 1901 | 7.4m |
| **Belfast** | 0544 | 3.1m | 1856 | 2.9m |
| **Cobh** | -- | -- | 1232 | 3.2m |
| **Cromer** | 0139 | 4.1m | 1342 | 4.2m |
| **Dover** | 0611 | 5.5m | 1839 | 5.6m |
| **Dublin** | 0628 | 3.6m | 1934 | 3.4m |
| **Galway** | -- | -- | 1243 | 4.0m |
| **Greenock** | 0632 | 3.0m | 1949 | 2.8m |
| **Harwich** | 0632 | 3.4m | 1855 | 3.2m |
| **Holyhead** | 0510 | 4.8m | 1818 | 4.5m |
| **Hull** | 0107 | 5.9m | 1311 | 6.1m |
| **Leith** | 0931 | 4.6m | 2230 | 4.7m |
| **Liverpool** | 0557 | 7.9m | 1846 | 7.6m |
| **London Bridge** | 0833 | 6.2m | 2102 | 5.8m |
| **Lossiemouth** | 0625 | 3.3m | 1931 | 3.3m |
| **Milford Haven** | 0046 | 5.7m | 1330 | 5.4m |
| **Newquay** | -- | -- | 1229 | 5.4m |
| **North Shields** | 1024 | 4.2m | 2336 | 4.2m |
| **Oban** | 0032 | 3.1m | 1349 | 2.7m |
| **Penzance** | -- | -- | 1204 | 4.3m |
| **Plymouth** | 0000 | 4.6m | 1303 | 4.3m |
| **Portsmouth** | 0623 | 3.9m | 1921 | 4.1m |
| **Southport** | 0503 | 7.6m | 1747 | 7.3m |
| **Stornoway** | 0159 | 4.0m | 1501 | 3.6m |
| **Weymouth** | 0027 | 0.8m | 1325 | 0.5m |
| **Whitby** | -- | -- | 1057 | 4.6m |
| **Wick** | 0559 | 2.8m | 1917 | 2.7m |
| **Workington** | 0618 | 6.9m | 1912 | 6.6m |

## Sun & Moon



| | |
|---|---|
| **Sun rises** | 0511 |
| **Sun sets** | 2042 |
| **Moon rises** | 0316 |
| **Moon sets** | 1253 |
| **New Moon** | 19 May |

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

## Lighting up

| | |
|---|---|
| **Belfast** | 2120 to 0521 |
| **Birm'ham** | 2053 to 0513 |
| **Brighton** | 2040 to 0513 |
| **Bristol** | 2052 to 0521 |
| **Carlisle** | 2108 to 0506 |
| **Cork** | 2117 to 0543 |
| **Dublin** | 2115 to 0527 |
| **Glasgow** | 2119 to 0508 |
| **Harlech** | 2104 to 0521 |
| **Inverness** | 2127 to 0457 |
| **London** | 2042 to 0510 |
| **M'chester** | 2059 to 0511 |
| **Newcastle** | 2104 to 0501 |
| **Norwich** | 2041 to 0500 |
| **Penzance** | 2059 to 0538 |

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The Democrats must act now to stop Trump *Jonathan Freedland, page 3*
The police can do what they want to us now *George Monbiot, page 4*
Eurovision in the UK lifts my Ukrainian heart *Taras Topolia, page 5*

G2 Daily pullout life & arts section *Inside*

**The Guardian** Saturday 13 May 2023

# Journal

Opinion and ideas

# Pity the Tory Brexiteers - they won the war and lost the peace

## Seven years after the country voted to leave the EU, the daily arguments over what precisely that meant and how precisely to do it still have the freshness of a vegetable rotting in a Great British field for want of any Great Brit to pick it.

**Marina Hyde**



Brexit is a journey, not a destination - like a late-night trip on TransPennine Express, or "life" on Instagram. Incredibly, the Conservative party has now found yet another way to divide itself over the issue. Yes, even its splits have splits. Brexiteers themselves have now subdivided into diehards and compromisers. Expect both those categories to subdivide again soon, as we hurtle inexorably towards the logical end of the Brexit process: hundreds of individual politicians screaming into hundreds of individual TV cameras that only they can fix it.

One of these will be the last face you see before you die. I don't mean in the traditional sense you often see that trope deployed: implying you'll be cowering at the homicidal hand of the maniac in question.

I just mean that, many years from now, at the natural end of your life, shivering in some tarpaulin-tented outpost of the care home system that all this sort of stuff prevented politicians from ever fixing, one or other of them will be on the telly as you rattle out your last breath, then get exported to a far-flung emerging-market country for cremation as part of the exciting new trade deal, worth 0.000003% to UK GDP, that was signed by Sixtus Rees-Mogg in the wake of the second water wars.

Or, as Theresa May put it, a full three imploded prime ministerships ago: "Brexit means Brexit, and we ARE going to make a success of it."

Anyway, the latest form the forever war has achieved is a row between the Conservative government, which has U-turned on repealing every single piece of retained EU law, and various hardliners from its own party who think they should stick to the original plan. Compromisers are epitomised by trade secretary, Kemi Badenoch. I don't need to fill you in on Kemi. For much of the past year, she has been the latest amusingly overhyped act being pushed as the next big thing by the Conservative A&R department. Every time she takes the stage it feels like some middle-aged guy in an ill-advised deep V is going to try to stick a coke spoon up your nose while rasping in your ear that she's "the real deal". But look, as the trademarked Most Effective Minister in Government, Michael Gove is presumably worth listening to.

Sunak had promised to repeal about 4,000 EU laws in a leadership campaign video, complete with a big shredder and soundtracked by Beethoven's Ode to Joy. This promise was unpromised this week by Badenoch, first via the pages of the Daily Telegraph, then subsequently

*

*Join Marina Hyde and Jonathan Freedland for a Guardian Live event in London on Thursday 1 June. Book in-person or livestream tickets on the Guardian's website*

# 2

## Pity the Tory Brexiteers – they won the war and lost the peace

**Marina Hyde**

← *Continued from front*

at the dispatch box, where she revealed that a mere 600 laws would go. People on all sides were incensed by various aspects of this, so Badenoch declared she was "very pleased to be taking the pragmatic middle ground". And, like me, you will be very pleased at the notion of having to take a lesson in pragmatism from actual Kemi Badenoch. Seriously, though, I do feel as though I should be more personally drawn to Kemi – she's terminally sarcastic, and seems to think her job is to write newspaper columns.

But her about-face has incensed some of her colleagues, notably Jacob Rees-Mogg, whose calico underthings are in quite the twist. How is Rees-Mogg still a feature of public life? In any just world, he would by now be understudying some of the furniture in an am-dram production of The Mousetrap; instead, he was on hand to tell the BBC of Sunak: "He has broken his word. This is very serious in my view." Mm.

It was Jacob, of course, who was accused of (and denied) misleading the late Queen over what turned out to be the unlawful prorogation of parliament. Far be it from any of us to preempt the history books, but that's probably a worse whopper than a tweeted campaign video for the leadership election that Sunak lost.

We should also remember that when he was made Brexit opportunities minister, Jacob was immediately reduced to asking Sun readers how to do his job, requesting that they sent in ideas of EU laws we could scrap. The benefits of this "initiative" never materialised, though Rees-Mogg did at one point last year cite the fact he had headed off a 2% rise in the cost of fish fingers. (Thanks to our G7-beating inflation rate, alas, fish fingers are currently retailing for at least 15% more than they were back then.)

Next to line up against Badenoch was fellow ERG all-star Mark Francois, another name none of us should ever have had to learn unless he was our MP, but who – owing to the interminable Brexit saga – has now clocked up more TV hours than Phillip Schofield (and may even outlast him). Badenoch shot back that the ERG are "all talk" – a disparagement that hovers dangerously close to describing them as "all mouth and no trousers".

I was reminded the other day that insanity became so normalised during the Brexit wars that in 2019 Mark had a staring match with the novelist Will Self on a lunchtime BBC politics show, apparently prompted by a green room argument about the size of Mark's penis.

In other signs of rude political health, this weekend sees Tory activists head to Bournemouth for a conference organised by the Conservative Democratic Organisation. This is a sort of Continuity Boris campaign, spearheaded by the likes of serial wingnut and ex-MEP David Campbell Bannerman, and the former disgraced Tory treasurer and Tory megadonor Lord Cruddas. Cruddas is one of the stupidest people ever to wear ermine – even counting the baroque genetic disasters of the 18th and 19th centuries – yet he persists in the delusion that he's a power player.

He is not alone among the fractious warlords of the Tory party. Having lost more than 1,000 seats to progressive parties in last week's local elections, all kinds of geniuses have alighted on the only logical answer: move rightwards.

Meanwhile, Brexit still has to get done, or redone, or undone some more. The grim irony is that nothing could have made the British people more "left behind" than the Brexit process itself – almost seven long years of doing barely anything else (bar weathering a deadly global plague) while other countries got on with having a life, a growth plan and the first clue about where they realistically fitted into the complex geopolitics of the modern world.

None of these was the path our politicians chose. I guess you reap what you sow – unless, that is, you leave even that to rot in the ground.

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*'Comment is free… but facts are sacred'* CP Scott

### Housing

## Michael Gove is right: leaseholding must go. A pity No 10 disagreed

The leasehold system of property ownership in England and Wales is a feudal relic, a hangover from the middle ages when powerful families wanted to retain ownership of their land while maximising their earnings from it. In recent years it had seen homes created merely to provide an income for whoever owns the freehold. These archaic laws ought to be reformed out of existence. It was heartening that Michael Gove, the cabinet minister with responsibility for housing, agreed. But Downing Street has blocked his proposal, wary of picking a fight with wealthy donors ahead of a general election.

This is a shortsighted move that confirms the Conservatives as being out of touch with ordinary people's concerns. About a fifth of homes in England are leasehold properties, many of them flats in cities. Under such contracts, homeowners enter into long-term leases in which they must pay a yearly ground rent to freeholders. The scandal is that ground rents and service charges for maintenance can rise quickly to ridiculously high levels. Renters are exploited too, as landlords pass on the costs of such profiteering by increasing rent.

Last year a ban on new-build homes being sold as leasehold properties came into force. But almost 5m homes are still vulnerable to acquisitive freeholders. These voters are unlikely to think much of broken promises, especially when the big winners from this status quo will be offshore companies, investment funds and aristocratic landowners, including the royal family.

The issue has been rising up the political agenda, partly because of the cost of living crisis but also because the Grenfell Tower fire focused attention on the issues with cladding that leaseholders of flats had long endured. Mr Gove does plan stronger protections for tenants from exorbitant ground rents and will strengthen their hand in negotiations with freeholders. These are small steps forward in the right direction, but won't go far enough for many people hit with the double whammy of rising mortgages and service charges.

The cabinet minister has called for a "sustainable housing settlement", but often found himself on the losing side of the argument. In this case, the Treasury balked at the cost of buying out freeholders. He was also forced by rebellious Tory MPs to water down housing targets for local councils. Failing to build enough homes in Conservative areas placates today's voters at the expense of future ones.

The British empire spread leasehold to every corner of the globe, but it disappeared along with the pith helmets. It is virtually gone from Scotland, where flat owners take stakes in the building. England and Wales did introduce an alternative – commonhold tenure, where homeowners appoint managing agents – in 2002. But this has failed to take off, unsurprising perhaps given that it is less attractive to developers than leasehold, which can secure ongoing income streams.

The Labour party has made the right noises but it has yet to say it would do what the Conservatives could not. Yet the Tories are in desperate need of the sort of popularity that ending leaseholding would earn. Instead, Mr Gove's party appears unable to bite the hand that feeds it. The property sector was responsible for 20% of all donations taken by the Conservatives in the 10 years from 2010. By breaking a pledge to abolish the leasehold system, the Tories look more troubled by the needs of their backers than those of the country.

### Taylor Swift

## False memoir rumour is a cautionary tale for the age of TikTok

Has there ever been such a flutter in the pop culture dovecote as the one provoked by the "leak" that an unknown book, due to be published in July, was by the American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift? A million copies were reportedly poised to roll off the presses of the mystery title, which was identified only as "4C Untitled Flatiron Nonfiction Summer 2023". It had soared to the top of the US book charts.

The date for revealing the author and title had been set for next month, ahead of publication in July, but after a week of feverish discussion, and the presale of many thousands of books at a full price of $45 (£36) a copy, the publisher was forced to show its hand early. The title is an oral history of – and by – the K-pop boyband BTS.

As the first Asian group to break through to the top of the western music industry, and worth an estimated $3.6bn annually to South Korea's economy, BTS have their own mammoth fanbase, just not the same one. Their fans, known as Army, are famously devoted and ferociously energetic and organised. They may also be all the hungrier for new content, given that BTS are on a "temporary break", with some members already beginning their compulsory military service. The title remains at the top of Amazon's US bookchart.

The music business has never been short on hype. But this saga was driven primarily by consumers rather than publicists. The most interesting thing about it is what it says about the power of TikTok and the precipitous spread of misinformation among those who really want to believe. In this respect, the episode could be seen as an analogue of any number of far-fetched conspiracy theories.

Given that Swift is just 33 years old, and in middle of both a punishing multi-arena tour and a project to re-record her first six albums, it always seemed unlikely that she could have made time for a memoir. Numerology played a part in the spread of the rumour, with fans speculating that the digits in the pagination – 544 – added up to Swift's favourite number, 13. The fact that some editions of Jane Austen's Emma, Charles Dickens's Great Expectations and Louisa May Alcott's Little Women have the same pagination wouldn't have deterred them. In a teasing tweet last week, Swift made an inside joke about the number nine (the publication date of the mystery book, but also a date mentioned in one of her lyrics).

What is beyond doubt is the astonishing popularity of both acts. Swift has just become the first living artist with 10 albums simultaneously in the Top 100 of the US charts and the first living female artist with at least three albums in the Top 10 at the same time. BTS have repeatedly smashed records and notched up six US No 1s, with all their albums topping the US charts. The two acts have battled it out for supremacy globally.

This level of acclaim sets musicians up for the algorithmic manipulation that makes more sinister conspiracy theories fly. That viral runaways are a pact with the devil is not in question. It is like a gold rush, except with prospectors who do not regard themselves as speculators but as buyers in good faith.

The mystery memoir is a cautionary tale for our time – though in this case, some booksellers have promised refunds to disappointed Swifties. Not everyone is so scrupulous. Buyer beware.




# The Democrats must act now to stop a second Trump term

**Jonathan Freedland**



We may come to remember this period as the interlude: the inter-Trump years. After the sigh of relief heard around the world when Donald Trump was defeated in November 2020, a grim realisation should be dawning: the threat of a Trump return to the White House is growing.

His first task is to win the Republican party's presidential nomination, but that hurdle is shrinking daily. Trump's grip on his party remains firm, with none of his putative rivals coming close. Of course, the first round of primary voting is months away, and much could change, but the shape of the race is already clear - and Trump is dominant. Witness the reaction to an event that would once have been terminal for any politician: this week's civil court verdict that he had sexually abused the magazine writer E Jean Carroll in a New York department store in the 1990s, and then defamed her by branding her a liar.

That "makes me want to vote for him twice", said Senator Tommy Tuberville of Alabama of the jury's decision, articulating the view held by many millions of Republicans that this judgment - and any other legal finding against the former president - proves only that the elites are out to get him.

There was a similar Republican response in March when Trump was indicted, also in New York, over hush money paid to the former porn star Stormy Daniels. That saw his approval numbers among Republicans - the self-proclaimed party of family values - go up. For the believers, the indictment merely vindicated Trump's claim that he is the martyred victim of a liberal deep state. The pattern is clear: what should kill him only makes him stronger.

It helps that his most obvious challenger, the Florida governor, Ron DeSantis, is growing smaller in the spotlight. He is tetchy and struggles to connect: this week tape surfaced of advisers urging him before a TV debate to write the word "likable" at the top of his notes - just as a reminder. DeSantis's failure to go after Trump directly makes him look like a coward. Above all, DeSantis is pursuing a flawed strategy. He is

*Donald Trump at a Make America Great Again rally in New Hampshire last month*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOSEPH PREZIOSO/AFP/GETTY

## "Not content with ruining Republicans' faith in democracy, now Trump is doing the same to his followers' trust in the law

offering Trumpism without Trump. The trouble is, too many Republican primary voters like Trump, while DeSantis's brand of Trumpism is a hard sell to the wider electorate, who will vote in November 2024.

Plenty of Democrats concede that Trump is likely to win his party's nomination. Indeed, many *want* him to win, so sure are they that he will lose to Biden in a rematch of 2020. And he may. But that contest will be far too close for comfort, at least in the electoral college that decides the outcome. In 2020, just 44,000 votes in three states stood between a Biden victory and an electoral college tie. Now the polls look much worse for him.

This week a Washington Post/ABC survey not only showed the president six points behind Trump, it also found 63% of Americans believe Biden, who would be 86 at the end of a second term, lacks the mental sharpness to serve effectively, up from 43% in 2020. Put simply, it was a photo finish last time, and Trump's prospects are better now than then.

What would a Trump restoration entail? He himself has promised "retribution", and those who served under him warn that a returned Trump would be less chaotic, more focused, than he was first time around. His appearance at a CNN town hall event this week provided several clues. On policy, Ukraine should get ready to be abandoned, while the world should brace for a US prepared to default on its debts. Americans will once again be deluged with a torrent of lies, delivered so fast that by the time you've challenged one, there will have been four more. (That is one reason why the CNN broadcast was horribly misconceived: it failed to learn a key lesson of 2016, when the US media made itself a tool of misinformation.)

Trump also called Carroll a "whack job", and dismissed the sexual abuse verdict because it had been delivered in a liberal state under a judge appointed by Bill Clinton. This too has become a pattern, casting the justice system as merely another theatre in the partisan culture wars. Not content with destroying Republicans' faith in democracy to divert attention from the fact he lost an election, Trump is now doing the same to his followers' trust in the law, this time to distract from the fact that a jury decided he had been a sexual predator.

A second-term Trump would set about finishing what he started, breaking any institution that might stand in his way, whether that be the ballot box or the courts. As Senator Mitt Romney, a rare Republican voice of dissent, put it after the CNN show: "You see what you're going to get, which is a presidency untethered to the truth and untethered to the constitutional order."

None of this is certain, but all of it is possible. Democrats need to snap out of the complacency brought by victory in 2020 and work as if they are in a race against the devil and lagging behind - because they are. They need to address the Biden age issue fast: several party veterans urge the president to get out more, recommending the kind of closeup encounters with the public at which he thrives. They need to sell their achievements, not least a strong record on jobs. And they have to sound the alarm every day, warning of the danger Trump poses. Because it is clear and it is present.

# The police can do whatever they want to protesters now

George Monbiot



The more unequal a society becomes, the more oppressive its laws must be. This, I think, explains new acts that would not be out of place in a police state. So vague and broad are the powers granted to the police under last year's Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act and this year's Public Order Act that it is no longer clear where their abuse begins and ends.

At two o'clock on the morning of the coronation, the Metropolitan police, using last year's police act, arrested three people in Soho for carrying rape alarms. The police claimed they were acting on intelligence that rape alarms might be used to frighten the horses that would later be parading elsewhere.

The people they arrested were volunteers working for Westminster city council as "Night Stars", helping to stop the sexual harassment of women. They give rape alarms to women who might need them. The alarms are funded by the Home Office. Night Stars volunteers wear pink tabards emblazoned with the logo of their partner organisation … the Metropolitan police. Yet the three volunteers who were arrested were cuffed for three hours and held for 14 before being released on bail.

Why would the police arrest their own partners? What was the "intelligence" on which they were acting? If they were really worried about rape alarms being misused, why did they not simply confiscate them? It looks to me like the old paso doble between police and press. Two weeks before, the Mail on Sunday had run a front-page story headlined "Extremists' vile plot to spook King's horses with rape alarms: Fears protesters planning to sabotage Charles' Coronation could cause 'serious injuries or even deaths' … as eco-zealot groups set to join forces to cause chaos".

The Mail produced precisely zero evidence that environmental or republican activists were planning such a thing. But if the police wanted to find people carrying these devices, they knew where to go. The arrests were used by the Mail as a vindication of its story. Though Westminster council had explained to the newspaper that those arrested were its volunteers, the Mail described them as "militant activists … arrested over a plot to throw rape alarms at horses during King Charles's Coronation".

Were it not for the patient work of the journalist Mic Wright, that's how the story would have stood. Police and press are two tails of the same beast. The head of media at the Metropolitan police is a former crime reporter at the Daily Mail.

The new laws were also used pre-emptively to arrest campaigners from Republic and Just Stop Oil, and a journalist filming them, to thwart their vile plot to wear dangerous T-shirts and hold seditious placards. For good measure, Animal Rising said the police had rounded up some of its activists at a training session miles away from the coronation. Safer to arrest everyone who might dissent.

These laws have been introduced just as public trust in the police has collapsed. Louise Casey's report, released in March, found the Metropolitan police to be institutionally racist, misogynistic and homophobic. Yet the police have now been granted discretionary powers so broad that they can shut down any protest, on the vaguest suspicion that it might prove to be "disruptive". It's a green light for even greater abuses.

Last year's police act was bad enough, redefining "serious disruption" so widely that it could be applied to almost any situation, greatly increasing the penalties for acts of peaceful protest and creating a new and remarkably vague offence of "intentionally or recklessly causing public nuisance", with a penalty of up to 12 months in prison. Half the people arrested at or around the coronation were detained on this charge. But the Public Order Act 2023 is much worse.

> **The Public Order Act 2023 creates new offences designed to allow police to shut down every form of effective protest**

The new offences it creates have been designed to allow the police to shut down every form of effective protest. If you chain yourself to the railings or attach yourself to anything or anyone else you could be jailed for 51 weeks. If you carry equipment that the police claim could be used for such a purpose, you could also be breaking the law: at the coronation, protesters were arrested for the possession of string and luggage straps.

The act imposes blanket bans on protests against new roads, fracking or any other oil and gas works. If, as the anti-roads protester Swampy did, you dig a tunnel – or even enter one – you can be imprisoned for three years.

The act greatly expands the power of suspicionless stop and search, used to such discriminatory effect against black people. Anyone can now be searched if a police inspector or another senior officer "reasonably believes" protests might happen somewhere in the area, or that someone might be carrying a "prohibited object". If you resist a search, you can be imprisoned for 51 weeks.

The act introduces "serious disruption prevention orders", whose purpose seems to be to take out "aggravated activists": experienced campaigners and organisers, without whom coherent protests don't happen. The orders impose sweeping restrictions on these people, preventing them from attending or encouraging protests, confining them to particular places, forcing them to report to police stations, prohibiting them from associating with others. They can extend, if the police and courts so choose, effectively to house arrest. They blur the line between civil standards of proof and criminal punishment: an order can be applied on a mere "balance of probabilities", but if you breach its terms you can be imprisoned for 51 weeks. The order can last for two years, then be renewed for a further two.

The orders are among several forms of pre-emptive control and punishment the act permits. It necessitates a great widening of surveillance, to identify people deemed likely to commit one of the new crimes. It has been introduced while the undercover policing inquiry continues to reveal abuses by police spying on peaceful campaigners. They can do what they want to us now.

These are the state-of-emergency laws you would expect in the aftermath of a coup. But there is no public order emergency, just an emergency of another kind, that the protesters targeted by this legislation are trying to stop: the collapse of Earth systems.

We are being compelled by law to accept the destruction of the living world.




*Police arrest a Just Stop Oil protester in London on 3 May* PHOTOGRAPH: ANDY RAIN/EPA




# Eurovision in the UK lifts my Ukrainian heart

**Taras Topolia**



Life before the war broke out in my home country of Ukraine feels like a distant memory. Before, I was frontman of the band Antytila. I lived with my wife and three children in Kyiv. With my bandmates, we had plans to make new music and tour, playing stadiums across the country. But after February 2022, our only thoughts were to serve, to resist. Life changed radically overnight for all of us.

My bandmates Serhii Vusyk and Dmytro Zholud and I swapped our instruments for rifles, and joined the frontline. We became paramedics with the 130th battalion of the Ukrainian territorial defence forces, giving first aid to our brothers and saving lives.

It was too dangerous for my family to stay in Kyiv, so my wife and children moved first to western Ukraine before settling abroad. My wife and three children landed in New Jersey, in the US, where they have remained with my mother and stepfather. My wife, Alyosha, who is also a musician, wrote last year of how she kept her bags packed by the door, desperate to return home at the first sign of safety.

Our separation was made all the more dramatic by the very real threat I was facing each day: would I leave the frontline alive?

More than a year on, I am a musician once again. I was reminded of that fact when I took to the stage in Liverpool, playing a crowded square at the Eurovision village. The event had all the markers of the shows I had played before the conflict: the fans, a huge stage and great sound.

But war changes you. Eurovision has a different meaning now. Between songs, we spoke about the war, how to create more support for our troops, how to enrol more people into our resistance. Music has never been more political. Eurovision has taken on a different meaning this year.

After seven months on the frontline, I was able to return to Kyiv in October 2022, and from there, fly to the US to be reunited with my wife and children. Since then, I try to visit my family as often as I can. I am able to travel now but we remain separated by this war: I am still living in Kyiv, but it is still too dangerous for them to come home. Unless you've lived through it, it is impossible to imagine how war devastates families - millions like mine have been separated.

Being able to see my family has felt heavy at times, knowing just how many soldiers will never have the chance to return home or hug their wives and children. In Kyiv, we look after many children who have had their fathers stolen from them - our brothers in arms.

Today, my bandmates and I are playing music again around the world, but Ukraine's independence remains our priority. Through charity concerts, we are able to raise funds to buy new weapons, and continue to support our battalion fighting for freedom in Ukraine. Our ultimate goal is victory in war - if we fail, the world order will never be the same again. We try to use our music as another weapon in our arsenal.

Eurovision is an amazing platform for that message. Last year, Kalush Orchestra's win was a vote of confidence from our European neighbours that Ukraine could win this war. Every vote for them was a vote for democracy, for shared values, for the principles of peace and fairness. It sent us a message of support on the frontline, that Europe believed we could host Eurovision in 2023 on our own sovereign soil.

As the United Kingdom hosts this year's competition, I'm also reminded of what we haven't achieved - not being able to host means the fight continues, and more lives being lost. But seeing the UK host Eurovision in Ukraine's name gives us a continued power to fight. Seeing crowds of British faces supporting us gives me a feeling of pleasure that is indescribable.

It means so very much. Ukrainians see how much the British people care; we are reminded of their enduring support, of how they took in our refugees.

Eurovision isn't only about winning. It's also an opportunity to be part of something bigger - to express what you feel using music. We are thankful the UK has given us a platform this year for creativity - an opportunity to be artists again. One day, I have no doubt that Ukraine will host Eurovision with pride, and we will be able to welcome those who supported us so fiercely.

*As told to Lucy Pasha-Robinson*

*
**Taras Topolia** *is the lead singer of the Ukrainian band Antytila*

# Letters

## We need AI to help us face today's challenges

Naomi Klein's article about the dangers of generative AI makes many valid points about the economic and social consequences of the new technology (The climate fix, the end of work - and the other grand lies of AI, 9 May). But her choice of language about how to describe the mistakes that the new AI makes seems to suggest she is committed mainly to providing an ideological interpretation of the new technology.

Saying that mistakes are the results of glitches in the code rather than the tech hallucinating suggests the simulation is a simple one, involving a kind of power of the false rather than a more complex one that allows the possibility of some form of fabulation. This is important because it means that the technology can't be seen simply as a control technology, like nuclear fusion or self-driving cars, but instead indicates a switch to an adaptive form of technology, ie, ones that are based on adapting what is already out there rather than trying to reinvent what exists, as in some form of innovation.

Obviously, climate change will require more of the adaptive kinds of technology, like reusable space rockets and wind farms, because control technologies are very resource heavy and tend to cause a lot of collateral damage.

**Terry Price**
*London*

● Naomi Klein is right to voice scepticism about the claims made for generative AI. As its development coincides with endgame capitalism, a minimum requirement for its effective governance must be that those responsible for its programming are truly representative, not only of humanity as a whole but the living planet.

Rather than a group of white, male, wealthy individuals developing AI in their image, we need to ensure that indigenous wisdom, the aspirations of future generations drawn from all continents and those able to identify the impact of potential decisions and actions on our ecosystems all need to participate in the design of these AI developments. Without such input, all such AI will do is exacerbate our demise: with these contributions, it may yet avert it. Surely this is an issue that is too important to be left to Silicon Valley to self-determine.

**Dave Hunter**
*Bristol*

> **Surely this is an issue that is too important to be left to Silicon Valley to self-determine**
>
> **Dave Hunter**

● The real danger of AI systems arises from the fact that these systems have no actual intelligence and so cannot distinguish whether the results they produce are correct or not. ChatGPT produces intelligent results in the midst of a whole lot of other results which, to our human intelligence, are simply ridiculous. This doesn't matter too much because we simply laugh at and discard the ridiculous results.

But when these AI systems are controlling cars and planes, where the ridiculous results are a danger to life and can't just be "discarded", the consequences could be catastrophic. The artificial neural networks producing AI are bandied about as emulators of the brain. But in spite of decades of dedicated research, neural networks have just 10 to 1,000 neurons, whereas the human brain has 86bn of them.

No wonder that an AI system has no way of knowing whether it has produced an intelligent (by human standards) result.

**Charles Rowe**
*Wantage, Oxfordshire*

● It is understandable that there is concern over the effect that AI will have on our future, but I am equally concerned about the damage that humans will do if we're left in charge (Why the godfather of AI fears for humanity, theguardian.com, 5 May).

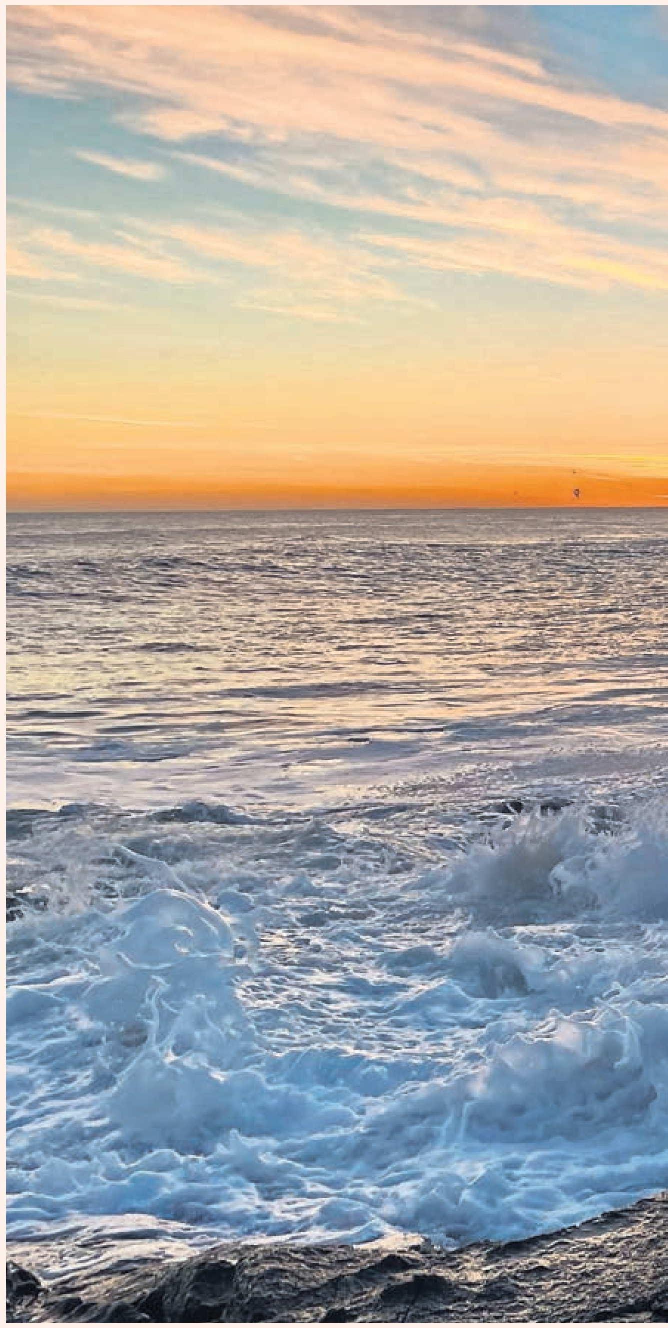
Would an AI system really have dealt with the Covid pandemic worse than Boris Johnson? Would it have allowed our planet to get so close to the precipice of climate catastrophe? Geoffrey Hinton believes that once AI is more intelligent than us, it will inevitably take charge, and perhaps he is right to be concerned. On the other hand, it might be just what we need.

**Ben Chester**
*Stroud, Gloucestershire*

### Morning wave

*'We get beautiful sunrises this time of year in Craster. I got up at 5.30am to capture the waves against the rising sun'*

BERNARD JAUREGUI/ GUARDIAN COMMUNITY



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## Not enough is being done to confront the tragedy of dementia

Amelia Hill rightly reports that Alzheimer's disease only contributes to between 60% and 70% of dementia cases (Lives upended by Alzheimer's - and a glimmer of hope, 9 May). As we are becoming ever more aware, dementia is a neglected area of health research and management, and social care, too: the consequences, as illustrated by the saddening case studies provided, are tragic.

After being diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia at 59, my brother died a pitiful and excruciating death five years later. Nothing could be done. Well-resourced funding for research in the various forms of dementia is essential, and failings in health and social care must be grasped.

Contrasting observations can be made about living with dementia in England: my brother was based in Belfast, where social care and health are a single system, good supported accommodation was available, and the medical and social work structure performed effectively and continued throughout the passage of his disease.

Things weren't perfect, and effort and advocacy were needed on his behalf; but the contrast with what is available in England was stark.

**Hilary Kitchin**
*London*

● Amelia Hill's focus on "the toll of caring for loved ones with dementia" perfectly captures why it is vital to provide emotional and practical support to family carers looking after someone with dementia. All carers are entitled to a carer's assessment, which should connect them with services and information to make a difference to their daily lives.

However, the majority of family dementia carers have never received an assessment, let alone any subsequent support. With 700,000 families across the UK living with dementia, charities like ours can only do so much. We urgently need more support for unpaid family carers. Services must be designed around their needs and take account of changing individual realities - such as a carer reaching a time when they cannot even leave their own home.

A promise of funding to support carers is not enough. We need details of how support will be provided and sustained. The burden of dementia and dementia care could not be more pressing.

**Melanie Blanksby**
*Interim CEO, Dementia Carers Count*

## Policy a priority to get children active

As Devi Sridhar rightly highlights (The secret to why exercise is so good for mental health? 'Hope molecules', theguardian.com, 4 May), physical activity is crucial for maintaining good health and preventing illness. This is particularly pertinent for young people today, who are faced with a crisis in physical and mental health.

The evidence is clear that active children do better and active schools achieve more. Sadly, children exist in a system that is rigged against them - from education policy to local planning, from public health policy to the marketing of products detrimental to their health. Unhappy, unhealthy children don't learn, which prevents them from fulfilling their potential in life.

Change in policymaking is long overdue and must shift towards prevention rather than cure. A key part of that shift is embracing the well-evidenced impact of play, physical activity and sport. We need action to focus minds on supporting young people to be active.

Too few parents know how important daily physical activity is - less than half (43%) know that young people should spend at least 60 minutes a day being moderately or vigorously active.

The Youth Sport Trust is proud to lead National School Sports Week, which aims to promote the benefits of an active lifestyle, support young people to get active, and focus on making sure that taking part in PE, sport and play is fun.

But we need to do much more. Young people are calling out for policymaking that prioritises their health and wellbeing across the board, including a focus on enabling them to increase their activity levels and empowering them to lead happier and healthier lives. Political parties would do well to listen to their voices.

**Alison Oliver**
*Chief executive, Youth Sport Trust*

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## In Chelsea, art and culture are for all

Your story in Wednesday's print edition regarding funding spent on art in Chelsea was misleading by its omission of salient points (Kensington buys art for wealthy area despite stark inequalities, 10 May).

All boroughs collect charges from developers based on land values and infrastructure needs. Areas with higher land values, such as Chelsea, usually generate larger amounts.

As councillors, we are very aware that Kensington and Chelsea comprises areas of great affluence and poverty so we have – uniquely in London – redistributed 25% of developer contributions across our wards.

People apply for projects in their neighbourhoods so we can be confident that all projects are supported by our constituents. There have been applications for art and culture, but also for community gardens, an archive in Ladbroke Grove and noise cameras to help tackle noise pollution.

We do not spend money on public art at the expense of local infrastructure. We have a programme to build 600 new homes, we have opened a new Grenfell nursery, built Barlby special school and are investing in streetscape schemes. We are improving our borough for all and use developer charges to help fund these improvements.

Art and culture are for everyone, whether in Lots Road or Ladbroke Grove. Alongside our partners, we continue to contribute funding to the Notting Hill carnival, the Tabernacle in north Kensington and the Kensington and Chelsea festival.

Culture should not be seen as a luxury – it is a vital component of our community life.

**Emma Will**
*Lead member for community safety, culture and leisure, Kensington and Chelsea council*

## Sleep apnoea and its danger for motorists

One of the biggest causes of "sleepy driving" (Blood test for dangerously tired drivers may enable prosecutions, 8 May) could be sleep apnoea. This is where your sleeping continually stops and starts at night.

I was diagnosed as suffering from severe sleep apnoea (having 41 "events" per hour) and experienced tiredness during the day, especially in the afternoon. I now use a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine at night, meaning air is continually pumped, via a hose and mask, into my airway.

I would recommend anyone who suffers from broken sleep and is tired during the day to see their GP and ask to be referred to see a specialist (though this may be increasingly difficult these days). This machine can make a life-changing difference.

**Alan Quinn**
*Prestwich, Manchester*

## Corrections and clarifications

● The population of the town of King's Lynn is about 48,000, not 154,000, which is for the larger borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (Hail King Charles: a monarch in his pomp but out of his time, 6 May, Journal, p1).

● An article invited readers to visit Manchester's People's History Museum to see "Michael Foot's donkey jacket" (While it's quiet …, 6 May, p23). To clarify the reference: this item, which was derided by the rightwing press as disrespectfully shabby when worn by the former Labour leader on Remembrance Sunday in 1981, was in fact an overcoat from Harrods, bought for the occasion by his wife.

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com or The readers' editor, **Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU**. You can also leave a voicemail on **020 3353 4736**

## Benefit of putting Britons to the test

Surely there's an easy way to strip the controversy and unfairness from the citizenship test (Zoe Williams, 9 May). Simply validate the test by putting it to a random sample of, say, 2,000 UK nationals and then use the average or median score as the pass mark. Given the obscurity of many of the questions, the suspicion is, of course, that the actual pass mark set by the Home Office is far higher than would be achieved by most Brits.

**Dr Stephen Benyunes**
*London*

● I can ignore "ums and errs" (Adrian Chiles, 11 May) but I frequently scream at the incessant use of " like", which is interspersed with alarming frequency in many (younger) persons' delivery, and "you know", which seems to be a favourite filler for politicians when defending government policy. Yours, like, you know.

**Sharman Finlay**
*Portrush, County Antrim*

● I grew up in a household of Siamese cats, and one was named Figaro just so that my dad could go into the evening garden and sing the chorus to call the cat in (Letters, 11 May). Being a very vocal Siamese, he often joined in.

**Sally Smith**
*Redruth, Cornwall*

● When the letterbox is at the bottom of the door, how should a postperson deliver an envelope marked "Do not bend" (Letters, 12 May)?

**David Hitchin**
*Seaford, East Sussex*

Established 1906

## Country diary

*Lydstep, Pembroke*

**The banks of the track were lapidary with spring flowers: wood anemones and stitchwort, dog violets and ramson, vernal squills shimmering azure across the greensward as I emerged on to the headland. As old climbers will, I was returning to a memorable place of my youth: Mother Carey's Kitchen. You'll find the name on navigation charts these days, but it's not as traditional as you might assume – I coined it after I first stood at the foot of its impressive high buttress of seamed walls, steep corners and bold arêtes.**

**Why? Because on that May morning 55 years ago, the air thronged with "Mother Carey's chickens": storm petrels, the smallest of seabirds, about the size of a sparrow, dark-plumaged and white-rumped. How wonderful to see them here over the sea once more, light and fluttery in their flight, wings angled as they stoop to feed on plankton and small, floating crustacea.**

**These petrels are mostly females, recently returned from their wintering grounds around the Cape of Good Hope to breed on Skomer Island, an hour's flight north-west of here. They rendezvous at Skomer annually with their mates, with whom they bond lifelong. Their nesting tunnels are among red sandstone boulder-scree. Males are left in occupation to repel intruders and refurbish nests, while their partners fly off to feed up before the laying of a single large white egg which will, after long incubation, hatch in darkness late in June.**

**Walk across Skomer's slopes while all this is going on and you'll be aware of a purring, vaguely reminiscent of the churring of nightjars from the ground at your feet. The nestlings gain weight rapidly, eventually are deserted by both parents, emerge warily at the burrow entrance and are immediately a focus for predators such as the little owl and the greater black-backed gull. They stretch and flap their wings, eventually stumble seawards and are gone on the long flights that constitute their lives.**

**I see water rising in the zawn, hop over its boulders, and climb steep rock to lounge once more among the squills, my indolence contrasting sharply with the industry of the petrels overhead.**

**Jim Perrin**

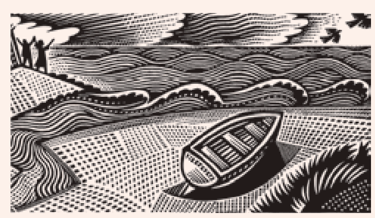
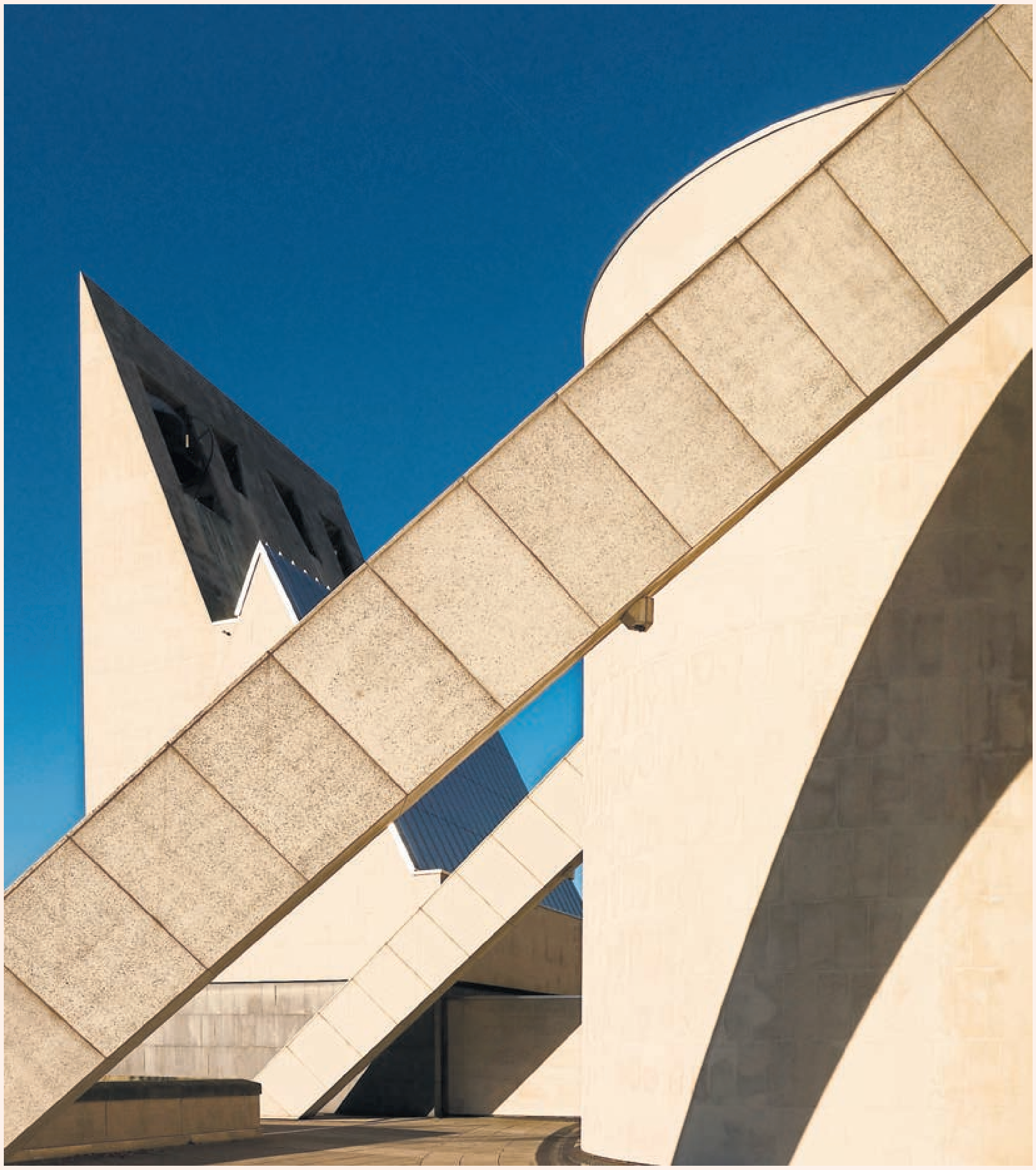


ILLUSTRATION: CLIFFORD HARPER

# Elain Harwood

## Architectural historian and champion of postwar buildings and the brutalist style



The architectural historian Elain Harwood, who has died unexpectedly aged 64, chronicled the postwar architecture of England and overcame opposition to achieve its acceptance as heritage. She wrote in the preface to her major book Space, Hope and Brutalism (2015): "The values of the welfare state formed me and I grew up believing they would last for ever."

The book was the summation of a long programme of research, growing out of the listing programme for English Heritage (now Historic England), for which she became the coordinator and main spokesperson, having joined the organisation in the mid-1980s.

Her colleague and mentor at English Heritage, Andrew Saint, published his groundbreaking study of postwar school buildings in 1987 and, from a broad background of interest in Victorian and 20th-century architecture, Elain increasingly specialised in the years after 1945. With Saint, she co-authored the buildings guide London (1991) in the series Exploring England's Heritage.

In 1992 English Heritage set up its postwar listing steering group, chaired by Bridget Cherry, which for 10 years conducted methodical research - in-house and by consultants - based on building types (schools, housing, churches, town halls, etc). Elain soon became the group's linchpin, visiting every site by train and bicycle and winning converts by her depth of knowledge and force of personality.

The enterprise was controversial and her then colleague Martin Cherry recalled how "while sometimes getting on the wrong side of management by upsetting ministers in conveying truth to power, she was the single major force during those years of changing attitudes to modern architecture. She was not easily cowed." Designs after 1945 in traditional styles, shunned by most advocates of modernism, were not excluded, softening the opposition.

Elain had been involved in the Thirties Society, which in 1992 became the Twentieth Century Society (C20). Its journal was renamed as Twentieth Century Architecture and published in a new format, including landmark articles by Elain. She joined the editorial committee in 2000 and in later years took the leading role in editing and production.

The monograph series Twentieth Century Architects, a collaboration between C20 and English Heritage, plus RIBA Publishing and, later, Liverpool University Press, provided short, well-illustrated books on architects and practices that had never before received such treatment. Elain's sheer energy and drive contributed to 21 books over 14 years, including her own on Chamberlin, Powell and Bon, the architects of the Barbican, and a forthcoming volume on Ernö Goldfinger, co-authored with me, after we had worked together on Tayler and Green (1998).

A collaboration between C20 and Batsford generated two book series, one which she edited with Susannah Charlton, based on 100 examples of building types, and one on styles and periods, with Elain as the main author.

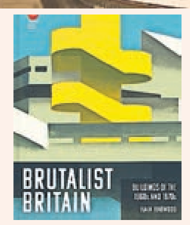


**"She was the single major force of changing attitudes to modern building design. She was not easily cowed**

This second series comprised Post-Modern Buildings in Britain (2017, with Geraint Franklin), Art Deco Britain (2019), Mid-Century Britain (2021) and Brutalist Britain (2022). The books displayed Elain's extraordinary knowledge of interesting buildings hidden in remote locations and her insistence on only the best photographs, often taken by herself.

These books were aimed at a non-specialist public and, at a time when much academic architectural writing cares more for theory than objects and facts, Elain put the latter at the centre of her work. This is above all evident in Space, Hope and Brutalism, which was awarded the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain (SAHGB) Alice Davis Hitchcock medallion.

The first draft was at least twice the length of the 700-page finished book, and must represent the largest ever accumulation of information on the subject, now unrepeatable owing to the loss of living witnesses. The photographs by James O Davies,




*Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, above, and Space House, East Grinstead, left, from Space, Hope and Brutalism, one of many books, including Brutalist Britain, above, that Harwood, right, aimed at a non-specialist public*

JAMES O DAVIES/ HISTORIC ENGLAND



including dramatic twilight scenes of interiors and exteriors together, were included in an exhibition, Brutal and Beautiful: Saving the Twentieth Century, staged at the Wellington Arch in London in 2014, dispelling preconceptions about grey concrete. The same images fill England's Post-war Listed Buildings (2015), illustrating and describing every listed item, the third version of a title first issued in 2000.

Born in Beeston, Nottingham, Elain was the elder child of Harold

Harwood, who worked in light engineering, and Maureen (nee Chadwick), one of his colleagues. Elain recalled a visit to the new Nottingham Playhouse with the Brownies as an early moment of architectural awakening.

After attending Bramcote Hills grammar school, Beeston, Elain went on to study history at Bristol University in 1976. She began exploring out-of-the-way buildings in the city, using the photographer Reece Winstone's illustrated guidebooks.

She had hoped for a career in museums, but after a period volunteering and doing odd jobs she sat the civil service exams and passed, joining the Department for the Environment. When part of the department became English Heritage she went with it, and landed in what had been the historic buildings division of the Greater London Council, a lively hub of historical research and conservation activism. From 1987 she was employed directly by that body as a historian and later became a senior architectural investigator; she was a popular if independent-minded colleague.

Early in her career, Elain joined the Victorian Society, the Thirties Society, the Cinema Theatre Association and the SAHGB, becoming a significant contributor to all. Taking the postgraduate diploma in historic building conservation at the Architectural Association in 1984-86, she wrote a thesis on Victorian asylums, and in 2010 gained a doctorate at Bristol University with a thesis on the rebuilding of the South Bank in London.

In addition to more specialised studies for Historic England, Elain wrote Nottingham, in the Pevsner architectural guides series (2008). She was an unstinting aid to authors revising the Pevsner county guides and a co-author for Northumberland.

Other achievements included television appearances on the 90s BBC series One Foot in the Past; walks and coach trips for C20 and other societies; entries and editorial advice for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography; writing obituaries for the Guardian; and carrying out interviews for the Architects' Lives series of National Life Stories, on whose selection panel she sat. She gave lectures across the world and undertook the annual convening and delivery of an intensive 20th-century unit for Cambridge University's master's course in building history. In 2022 she was awarded an honorary fellowship of the RIBA.

Elain was a sociable loner with a close circle of friends. She is survived by her mother and her brother, David.

**Alan Powers**

*Elain Harwood, architectural historian, born 10 June 1958; found dead 19 April 2023*

# Vivian White

## Panorama reporter who specialised in domestic politics and social issues

The BBC journalist Vivian White, who has died aged 76, was for two decades until his retirement in 2012 one of the most prominent and popular reporters on Panorama, the current affairs flagship created in 1953.

He was widely respected for his skill in making engaging current affairs programmes on issues ranging from rising rail fares and the treatment of elderly people, to flooding. His range expanded after 9/11 into significant films on British Muslims, Guantánamo Bay and Afghanistan, as well as programmes on Rupert Murdoch, and frequent fast-turnaround news specials, as channel controllers exercised more power over current affairs coverage.

For the programme Inside Guantánamo, in 2003, the US military allowed Panorama a supervised visit to the military prison in Cuba, but White and his crew were thrown out after he tried to speak to one of the detainees about their treatment. It was "too much for our hosts", he said.

His Panorama colleague John Ware described White as "a trouper. There was no side to him, no game playing." A succession of six Panorama editors came to appreciate how valuable and dependable he was. In the flesh and on screen White was an imposing man – which masked a diffident, shy personality and laconic sense of humour. Standing 6ft 7½ in tall, in size 13 shoes, he had a naturally booming voice that worked better on air than at work in an open-plan office. One Panorama editor solved the problem by giving him an office with a door that he could keep shut.

When he was making a programme about the failings of Yorkshire Water, one furious customer he tried to interview started hitting him because she thought he was so posh he must run the company. Early in his broadcasting career, he perfected a stance of standing with legs wide apart and knees together to modify his image of a very tall man clutching a microphone.

"He specialised in domestic politics, that was the heartland of his work, and in social issues," said George Carey, one of his editors. Carey first spotted White's potential when he joined the BBC as a trainee in 1971 and was working on a Robin Day nightly interview programme. "I was impressed by his seriousness, his persistence. He clearly had Robin Day's ear."

Born in Sutton, Surrey, Vivian was the son of Judith and Henry White, and educated at Highgate school in London and Aiglon college, Switzerland. His father was a War Office civil servant who after the second world war was deployed to Düsseldorf and Paris. Vivian studied economics at Selwyn College, Cambridge, and after graduating worked as a teacher before joining the BBC as a production assistant in 1971. When he left in 1976 the BBC records noted that he was "recommended for re-employment".



*White was widely respected for his skill in making engaging current affairs programmes on issues ranging from rising rail fares to the treatment of elderly people*

He joined LBC, the first licensed commercial radio station, launched in 1973, signalling the start of Independent Radio News and the expansion of broadcasting. There his talent as an industrial correspondent, scriptwriter and live broadcaster came to the fore.

Simon Albury, then a producer at World in Action, was impressed by his diligent reporting of the 1979 ACTT strike by television staffers that blacked out the UK's screens for three months. Albury recruited him to join Granada's thriving hubs of news and current affairs, where he also worked on Granada Tonight and Report Politics during the era of Margaret Thatcher.

In 1986 White was back at the BBC under an expansive contract covering radio and TV, engaged as "reporter, presenter, commentator, interviewer and speaker. Making appearances in studio, on location, written contributions, filmed stories to current affairs programmes, television" just before the rigorous agenda of the BBC deputy director general John Birt, recruited from LWT, swept in.

By 1989 he was contracted as a Panorama reporter-presenter, covered live political conferences in 1990 and then, after a further contract extension in 1992, was part of the 35-strong Panorama team. It was set a more testing brief of firmly deciding the scope of a programme story before going into production.

White became active in the National Union of Journalists between 2006 and 2009, representing BBC current affairs and documentary staffers, to contest cutbacks, changes to the BBC pension fund, pressure on staffers to go freelance and the growing inequalities in pay. He opted for voluntary redundancy in 2012, telling Ware he would spend the payoff on fast cars.

He and his second wife, Sue Freestone, a publisher, moved from west London to Wheddon Cross, a village at the highest point of Exmoor, which she loved because it reminded her of the wildness of her native Canada. He became a parish councillor and member of the Exmoor national park trust. White had a lifelong love of steam trains and dogs, and it amused his neighbours when this very tall man took his very-close-to-the-ground basset hound Archie for walks.

He is survived by Sue, whom he married in 1989, and her daughter, Sophie, and son, James; and by a daughter, Alice, from his first marriage, in 1981, to Jan Collie, which ended in divorce.

**Maggie Brown**

*Vivian White, broadcaster, born 15 October 1946; died 7 March 2023*

## Birthdays

**Today's birthdays: Frances Barber**, actor, 65; **Luciano Benetton**, co-founder, Benetton, 88; **Lady (Rosie) Boycott**, editor and broadcaster, 72; **Joe Brown**, singer, 82; **Eileen Diss**, theatrical designer, 92; **Paul Fleming**, general secretary, Equity, 35; **Dame Jane Glover**, conductor, 74; **Alison Goldfrapp**, singer and songwriter, 57; **Kathleen Jamie**, makar (Scotland's national poet), 61; **Harvey Keitel**, actor, 84; **Tasmin Little**, violinist, 58; **Richard Madeley**, broadcaster, 67; **Dame Natalie Massenet**, founder, Net-a-Porter, 58; **Armistead Maupin**, writer, 79; **Samantha Morton**, actor, 46; **Dr Raj Persaud**, psychiatrist and broadcaster, 60; **Selina Scott**, television presenter, 72; **Paul Thompson**, drummer, 72; **Yaya Touré**, footballer, 40; **Zoe Wanamaker**, actor, 74; **Stevie Wonder**, musician, 73.

**Tomorrow's birthdays: Francesca Annis**, actor, 78; **Natalie Appleton**, singer, 50; **Ian Astbury**, singer, 61; **Ian Blackford**, SNP MP, 62; **Cate Blanchett**, actor, 54; **Sir Chay Blyth**, yachtsman, 83; **David Byrne**, singer and songwriter, 71; **Eoin Colfer**, novelist, 58; **Sofia Coppola**, film director, 52; **Ann Gallagher**, former Tate director of collection, British Art, 66; **Lady (Sarah) Hogg**, economist, 77; **George Lucas**, film director and producer, 79; **Martine McCutcheon**, singer, actor, 47; **Fraser Nelson**, editor, the Spectator, 50; **Prof Sir Richard Peto**, cancer researcher, 80; **Dame Siân Phillips**, actor, 90; **Tim Roth**, actor, 62; **Malise Ruthven**, writer, 81; **Ruby Walsh**, jockey, 44; **Hywel Williams**, Plaid Cymru MP, 70; **David Yelland**, writer and journalist, 60; **Mark Zuckerberg**, co-founder of Facebook, 39.

## Announcements

### Birthdays

**BOOTH, Robert (Bob).** Happy 100th birthday! With love from John and Janet, Kate and Paul, Andrew and Lorraine, Alison and Howard, and all the great-grandchildren.

### In Memoriam

**FLETCHER, Helen.** 14 May 2016. Our Helen, so special, so radiant, so exceptionally kind and caring. You are at peace and we have a treasury of golden memories.

### Deaths

**GIBSON (nee CRESSWELL), Judith.** Widow of Professor Alan Gibson, FRS. Passed away peacefully at Freda Gunton Lodge, Colchester on Thursday 27 April, aged 98. Much-loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Memorial service to be held at noon, Friday 1 September 2023. Castle Methodist Church, Maidenburgh Street, Colchester CO1 1TT. Donations to Balkerne Gardens Trust.

For Announcements, Acknowledgments, Adoptions, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Births, Deaths, Engagements, Memorial Services and In Memoriam, email us at announcements@theguardian.com including your name, address and telephone number or phone 0203 353 2114.

# Obituaries

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# Other lives



## Joan Wall

*Hockey player who was never on a losing England side and encouraged the growth of the sport indoors*

My mother, Joan Wall, who has died aged 89, was an international hockey player and talented sprinter. She later went on to be a sports administrator.

She was born in Rotherhithe, south-east London, to Florence (nee Morrow), and her husband, Henry Barnett, an electrical engineer. An only child, Joan took up hockey at Bromley grammar school and also played for a local club, Atalanta, before being selected for Kent Schools, East Juniors and the Kent 1st XI, appearing in a seven-a-side exhibition match at the Festival of Britain in 1951. On leaving school she trained



*Joan Wall, third from right, lined up with the England hockey squad that toured the Netherlands in 1959 and won the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations tournament*

to be a teacher at Battersea College, in south-west London.

Joan married another teacher, Les Wall, in 1955, and, on moving to Nottingham, coached hockey and athletics and taught home economics at schools in the area.

In Nottingham, Joan joined Sherwood hockey club, and after representing Nottinghamshire and the Midlands, she was selected for the 1958 England tour of West Germany. Her first cap for her country came against Scotland in March 1959, playing in her familiar half-back position. That year she was also in the England team that won the International Federation of Women's Hockey Associations tournament in the Netherlands, effectively the forerunner of the women's hockey World Cup.

Her international career ended in 1960 after 14 caps; she was never on a losing England side during that time, taking part in 13 wins and one draw. She was known as an early adopter of the Indian-head hockey stick, which had a shorter head that improved ball control.

Aside from her hockey exploits, Joan was also a good athlete, holding the Kent 100 yards record and, once she got to Nottinghamshire, the record for the 100, 200 and 400 yard events for many years.

After taking time out from teaching in the 1960s to raise her two children, she resumed her career in Nottingham schools until she took early retirement in 1989.

> **She was an early adopter of the Indian head hockey stick that improved ball control**

She then worked for Sainsbury's as a food adviser until 1998.

Joan founded two hockey clubs in Nottingham: Sherwood Juniors in 1963, the first club in the country for 15- to 18-year-olds, and Carlton Ladies (subsequently Redhill Ladies) in 1971.

When the development of sports halls kickstarted indoor hockey in the 70s, she became indoor secretary of the Nottinghamshire Women's Hockey Association, Midlands Indoor chairman (1977-87) and an England Indoor selector for 10 years, seven as chairman. Her competitive spirit never left her, and after moving to Farnborough, Hampshire, in 2010 she continued playing bowls, leaving one club because she deemed it to be "too social".

In 2012, Joan donated her collection of scrapbooks, medals, trophies, hockey sticks and other memorabilia to the Hockey Museum in Woking, Surrey.

Her marriage to Les ended in divorce in 1988. She is survived by their children, Lynne and me.

**John Wall**



## Robin Cocks

*Head of palaeontology at the Natural History Museum and authority on fossil brachiopods*

My father, Robin Cocks, who has died aged 84, was one of the world's most distinguished students of brachiopods – small prehistoric marine bivalves, similar to a modern cockle shell. At the Natural History Museum, he rose to become keeper of palaeontology, and never lost his enthusiasm for science.

He joined the British Museum (Natural History) as scientific officer in 1965, ending up as keeper of palaeontology from 1986 until his official retirement in 1998. He published a steady stream of papers on brachiopods up until his death. By the 1990s he had become an expert on Ordovician and Silurian brachiopods, and claimed to have named a new genus for every letter of the alphabet. He travelled extensively and collaborated with many scientists, finally working in paleogeography and plate tectonics as well as on his beloved brachiopods.

He was president of the Palaeontological Association (1986-88), the Palaeontographical Society (1994-98) and the Geologists' Association (2004-06). The pinnacle of his service to the geological community came as president of the Geological Society of London (1998-2000). Robin's contribution to science was recognised by the Geological Society with the Coke medal in 1995, by Geologica Belgica with the Dumont medal in 2003, and by the Palaeontological Association with the Lapworth medal in 2010. He was appointed OBE in 1999, and awarded the TD for his work with the Royal Engineers Specialist Reserves.

He was the son of Ralph Cocks, a teacher, and Mary (nee Blackler), and claimed to be a cockney, having been born within earshot of Bow bells, but grew up with his great-aunt in Alton, Hampshire, where he was evacuated to during the second world war. Felsted school, Essex, and national service in Malaya with the Royal Artillery were followed by Hertford College, Oxford, where Robin gained a first-class honours degree in geology and a DPhil (1965).

In Oxford, he met Elaine Sturdy, whom he married in 1963. They settled in Bromley, Kent, and had three children, Zoe, Julia and me.

Robin was a keen philatelist and was interested in Roman history. He also liked his food and drink, and was a member of the Lucretian Society, a group of scientists who meet for occasional dinners. In his Who's Who entry, under "recreations", he put "country pursuits", which was a family joke for taking the dog out for walks.

In later years my father had to cope with health problems, but to his family and friends he seemed indestructible; if anything, the brachiopods and palaeogeography served to keep him going.

He is survived by Elaine and by his children and eight grandchildren.

**Mark Cocks**



## Jessica Skippon

*Film and video production expert also dedicated to supporting her local community in London*

My mother, Jessica Skippon, who has died aged 81, was a video producer and director who put her heart and soul into her London neighbourhood of Covent Garden over four decades.

An American by birth, she and her husband, Tom, had moved to the UK in 1978 to establish Skippon Video Associates, one of the UK's first video production companies. Based in Covent Garden, its output ranged from corporate training and European parliament information bulletins to the American TV series Civilization and the Jews, and shooting for a live Pink Floyd – The Wall video at Earls Court.

However, Jessica was proudest of her involvement in programmes designed to protect women and children, including Kids Can Say No! (1985) and Aftermath (1994), a short film for use by counsellors and social workers with survivors of rape.

When her video production work began to wind down in the late 1990s, she became active in her local community, founding the Covent Garden Housing Co-op in 1995 and chairing it until 2013. From 2007 she spent some time as an administrator at the local Seven Dials Housing Co-op.

She also arranged sewing and English classes for Bangladeshi women, and organised popular day trips for their families, helping her neighbour Shahina Khatun to raise funding for other related projects.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Jessica was the daughter of Jean Desmond, a beauty queen and lingerie industry model, and Charles Skippon Jr, a printer. After attending Hempstead, Woodmere and Levittown Memorial schools in New York she left in 1957 for stage school, after which she became a secretary and administrator in the film and television industry, including, from 1963 to 1965, as television coordinator at the Directors Guild of America, where she met Tom Cook, who worked for CBS. They were married in 1966.

From 1965 to 1969 she was a production coordinator/secretary on various films, including Wait Until Dark (1967), featuring Audrey Hepburn, and The Odd Couple (1969), starring Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau. At auditions for The Graduate (1967), a young Dustin Hoffman entertained the room by picking Jessica out to help him with an improvisatory routine.

In 1969 she and Tom moved to Australia, and she concentrated on looking after their children, Nina, me, Adam and J'aimee. In 1973 the family moved to New Zealand, where Jessica went back to film-related work as a production manager at Peach Wemyss films (1974-76) before going freelance as a producer and director, during which time she taught video-editing skills to women at the Auckland Women's Video Collective, which she had helped to set up.

After the move to London, in her spare time she loved to do genealogical research, and took on occasional commissions from clients to trace their family trees.

Adam died in 1995 and Tom died in 2016. Jessica is survived by her three daughters and six grandchildren.

**Caitlin Golaup**

# Puzzles



## Sudoku

*The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9.*

### Easy

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 8 | | 1 | 4 | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | 5 | | | | | | 1 | 7 |
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| 2 | 1 | | | | 9 | | 3 | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 3 | | | 6 |
| 3 | 2 | | 1 | | | | | 9 |
| 7 | 8 | | | | 2 | | | 4 |

### Medium

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 7 | | 1 | | 8 | | 6 | |
| | | 1 | | | | 9 | | |
| | 6 | | | | | | 2 | |
| 3 | | 6 | 2 | | 7 | 1 | | 4 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | | 9 | 5 | | 4 | 2 | | 6 |
| | 1 | | | | | | 8 | |
| | | 7 | | | | 4 | | |
| | 3 | | 4 | | 9 | | 5 | |

### Expert

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| 8 | | 6 | | | 3 | 9 | 7 | |
| | 1 | 2 | | 6 | | 5 | | 3 |
| | | | | 5 | | | | |
| 9 | | 5 | | 3 | | 7 | 1 | |
| | 6 | 8 | 5 | | | 1 | | 2 |
| | | | | | | 4 | 8 | |
| | | | | 2 | | | | |

## Futoshiki | Hard

*Fill in the grid so that every row and column contains the numbers 1-5. The "greater than" or "less than" signs indicate where a number is larger or smaller than its neighbour.*

```
[ ]   [ ] > [ ]   [ ]   [2]
       V     ^           ^
[ ] < [ ] < [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
 ^     V
[ ]   [ ]   [ ] > [ ]   [ ]
                   V
[ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ] < [ ]
 V                 V
[ ] < [ ]   [ ]   [ ] < [ ]
```

## Kids Word search

*Find all the listed words relating to martial arts in the grid, reading in straight lines, up, down or diagonally, either backwards or forwards.*

AIKIDO, BANDO, BASHO, DOJO, JUDO, JUJITSU, KARATE, KATA, KENDO, KUMDO, KUNG FU, KYUDO, SUMO, TEGUMI

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | H | Y | K | E | N | D | O | T |
| O | E | T | A | R | A | K | E | U |
| H | D | S | A | F | E | G | R | F |
| S | E | N | U | I | U | R | K | G |
| A | K | N | A | M | K | S | U | N |
| B | Y | O | I | B | O | I | M | U |
| J | U | J | I | T | S | U | D | K |
| E | D | O | A | T | A | K | O | O |
| E | O | D | R | O | D | U | J | I |

## Kids Countdown

*Can you work out the answers to the sums below?*

| Easy | Medium | Hard |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | 25 | 70 |
| × 4 | + 47 | ÷ 7 |
| *- 12* | *2/3 of it* | + 148 |
| ÷ 8 | *- 39* | *50% of it* |
| + 30 | *Treble it* | *- 69* |
| ÷ 11 | *- 19* | × 12 |
| + 13 | × 11 | *- 66* |
| *Half of it* | + 26 | ÷ 9 |
| + 17 | ÷ 6 | + 59 |
| ÷ 5 | + 25 | ÷ 5 |
| Answer | Answer | Answer |

## Solutions

**Kids Countdown**

*Easy: 5*
*Medium: 44*
*Hard: 13*

**Sudoku** *Easy*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 3 |
| 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 8 |
| 8 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| 5 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| 4 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 2 |
| 9 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| 3 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 7 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 |

**Sudoku** *Medium*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 8 |
| 8 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 4 |
| 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| 1 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 6 |
| 4 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 |
| 6 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| 2 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 7 |

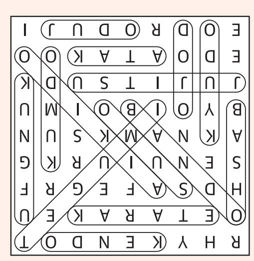
**Sudoku** *Expert*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| 1 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| 8 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| 9 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 6 |
| 7 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 9 |
| 3 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 7 |

**Futoshiki**

```
[1]   [4] > [3]   [5]   [2]
       V     ^           ^
[2] < [3] < [4]   [1]   [5]
 ^     V
[3]   [2]   [5] > [4]   [1]
                   V
[5]   [1]   [2]   [3] < [4]
 V                 V
[4] < [5]   [1]   [2] < [3]
```

**Kids Word search**





# Puzzles

## Yesterday's solutions

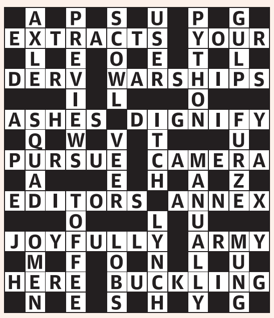
### Killer sudoku
*Easy*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 8 |
| 2 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 3 |
| 8 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| 7 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 4 |
| 5 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| 3 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 9 |
| 9 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1 |
| 1 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 7 |

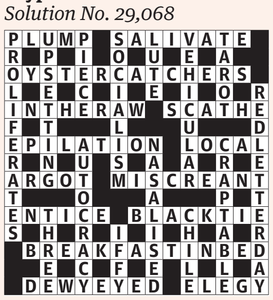
*Medium*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 5 |
| 4 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 1 |
| 9 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 7 |
| 2 | 9 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 4 |
| 5 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| 3 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 8 |
| 8 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 |
| 7 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 9 |

### Codeword



### Cryptic crossword
*Solution No. 29,068*

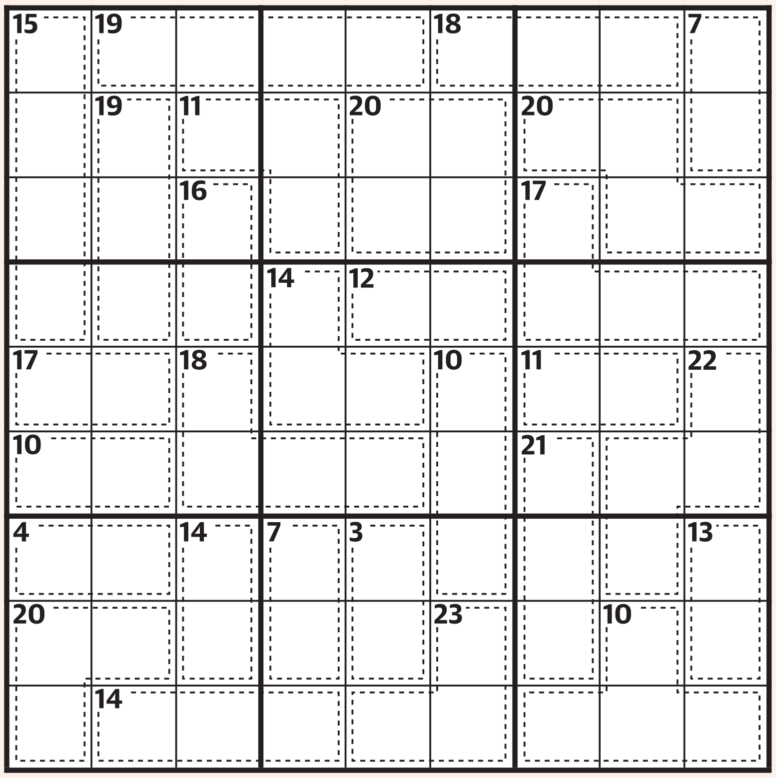


**Want more?** Get access to more than 4,000 puzzles at **theguardian.com/crossword**. To buy puzzle books, visit **guardianbookshop.com** or call **0330 333 6846**.

## Killer sudoku

### Hard No 865

*The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.*



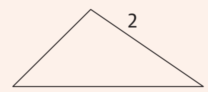
## Chris Maslanka's puzzles

### Pyrgic puzzles

**1** Pedanticus heard a trail on Radio 4 for something "starting on Monday to Friday evenings". Then (of a murderer) he heard that: "Police think he could have committed more murders." If looks could kill! What was his problem?

**2** If 7 × CD = COD find CD. (CD is the 2-digit number in base 10 whose first digit is C and last digit is D; yes, and the letter O does represent the digit 0.)

**3** According to the catalogue of *Rogues' Gallery* on Poppycock Terrace Garabaggio's latest masterpiece *Trinity* depicts a scalene triangle. Its angles are in a ratio 2 : 3 : 7 and the longest side is 2 units. I set Andy and Candy the task of deducing the missing sides. Candy used the sine rule, but Andy hadn't even heard of it. Luckily he was able to do it another way. How did *he* do it? What is the area? What are 3 properties of a scalene triangle?




**4** On the becalmed ship *Speedwell* the cabin boy shuffles 4 different aces and chooses one at random. If it is the Ace of Spades the game is over. If not he replaces the card, shuffles again and chooses a card at random again, and so on. Each random choice counts as a go. How many goes are expected per game on average? What are the chances the game lasts 4 goes? At least 4 goes?

**5** What is the 55555th number in the sequence:

2, 8, 512, 134, 92, 737, 370 …?

**email: maslanka@easynet.co.uk**

### Wordplay

**Wordpool**
In each case find the correct definition:

**SQUAMOUS**
a) slippery
b) covered with scales
c) squashable
d) hard to tie down

**OCCAMY**
a) simplification
b) like a razor
c) alloy imitating gold or silver
d) amputation

**TATOU**
a) giant armadillo
b) graffito
c) macaroni
d) card game

**E pluribus unum**
Rearrange the letters of INNOCENT ACTOR to make another word.

**Dropouts**
Replace each asterisk by a letter to make a word:

B*L*O*G

**Word Centre**
Identify a word from this centre:

****BOY****

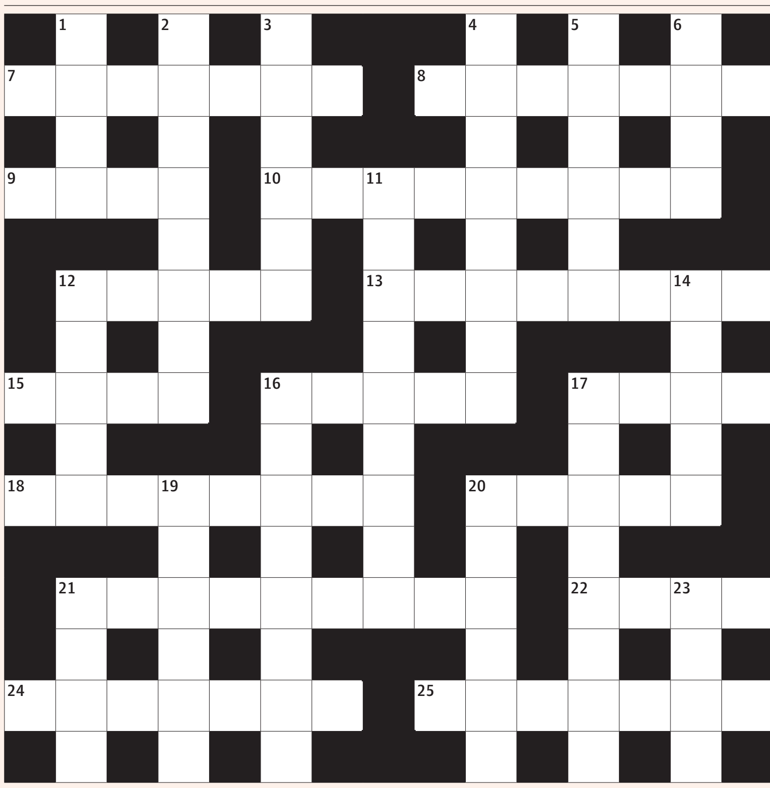
**Cryptic**
Artist in Bow produces optical phenomenon (7)

**Missing Links**
Find a word which follows the first word in the clue and precedes the second in each case making a fresh word or phrase. Eg the answer to *fish mix* could be *cake* (fish*cake* & *cake* mix) and to *bat man* it could be *he* (bat*he* & *he*-man)…

a) high tray
b) moon fingered
c) cocktail maker
d) clock paint
e) shopping bus
f) reap worthy

**©CMM 2023.** **Solutions on Page 58**

## Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,069 set by Paul



**Across**

**7** Philanderer's ruse to steal Yankee in embrace of sailor (7)
**8** Marvellous money (7)
**9** Seat one lost from 8 (4)
**10** Invalidate city freed after revolution (9)
**12** Reversal of a little thing I effortlessly put on (5)
**13** See 3
**15,20,24,22** Be patient: we meant 'sword'? (4,5,5,2,1,3)
**16** Bum moon (5)
**17** Pursue payment (4)
**18** Song second daughter extracted from señorita? (8)
**20** See 15
**21** See 3
**22** See 15
**24** See 15
**25** Star with heart of gold at the Moulin Rouge, say? (7)

**Down**

**1** Too informal, some clothes (4)
**2** Wild bestiary for 7 (8)
**3,13,21across** Players 1 without 8? (6,8,9)
**4** Disapproving expression heard as renovation starts behind hospital (8)
**5** Wrap up and put on top coat (6)
**6** Queen like a horse, could you say? (4)
**11** As clue to 'stew' initially forms – this is it! (9)
**12** Old coin's forgotten in a growing collection? (5)
**14** Short stay at hotel man hasn't begun (5)
**16** Drawing in style of French artist? Good to invest in that (8)
**17** Carry off method that's suffocated a playwright (4,4)
**19** Summon cord to connect two sides up (6)
**20** Standing, unable to sit having caught a pike, say? (6)
**21** Creative work, On Purulence? (4)
**23** Line: a boundary drawn up (4)



**The first five correct entries drawn each week win a copy of The Language Lover's Puzzle Book by Alex Bellos**
**Entries to:** The Guardian Crossword No 29,069, P.O. Box 17566, Birmingham, B33 3EZ, or Fax to 0121-742 1313 by Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday 22 May.

Name
Address

Postcode
Telephone number

☐ Tick here if you do not wish to receive further information from the Guardian Media Group or other companies screened by us.

How many times a week do you buy the Guardian? _____

How many times a month do you buy the Observer?* _____

**Ham and eggs, Spanish-style**
José Pizarro's jamón and asparagus

# Feast

**Issue No.277** Saturday 13 May 2023

**Yotam Ottolenghi**
Savoury breakfast bread pudding

**Nancy Birtwhistle**
£1 chickpea meals

**Stosie Madi**
Stuffed spring cabbage leaves

**Niki Segnit**
The best flavour matches for miso

**Kitchen aide**
Green peppers

**Felicity Cloake**
How to make perfect ceviche

**Benjamina Ebuehi**
No-bake lemon cheesecake

**Tom Hunt**
Berry muffins

**Rachel Roddy**
Asparagus spaghetti

**Grace Dent**
'A restaurant built on pure heart'



The Guardian



# Yotam Ottolenghi



**I love seeing what people are eating for breakfast.** In our test kitchen, for example, there's a range of wonderfully different things in everyone's morning bowl: Noor and Verena have their berry- and seed-filled porridge, Tara seems to eat a za'atar-doused variation on salad niçoise most mornings and Chaya usually comes up with some take or other on seafood with roti. The mix is eclectic, but savoury seems to be the theme that unites the team each morning, the celebration of which defines this week's recipes.



PHOTOGRAPHS: LOUISE HAGGER/THE GUARDIAN. FOOD STYLING: EMILY KYDD. PROP STYLING: JENNIFER KAY. FOOD ASSISTANT: SUSANNA UNSWORTH. INSET: GETTY IMAGES

## Strata with tomatoes and capers

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **35 min** |
| Rest | **4 hr+** |
| Cook | **1 hr 35 min** |
| Serves | **8** |
| Cost | **About £2 a head** |

**3 large onions,** peeled and cut into quarters (600g)
**4 garlic cloves,** peeled
**2 tbsp olive oil**
**1 tsp picked thyme leaves**
**250g streaky bacon,** cut into 1cm dice
**Fine sea salt and black pepper**
**70g parsley**, 30g leaves and fine stems finely chopped, the remaining 40g stems finely chopped and kept separate
**120g lancashire** (or cheddar), coarsely grated
**70g parmesan,** finely grated
**450g stale sourdough**, cut into 1½cm-thick slices
**3-4 plum tomatoes** (300g), grated (discard the skins)
**8 eggs**
**700ml full-fat milk**
**300ml double cream**
**2 lemons**, zest finely grated, to get 2 tsp, then juiced, to get 3 tbsp
**30g wholegrain mustard**

**For the salsa**
**130ml olive oil**
**30g fine capers** (drained weight)
**150g cherry tomatoes**, cut into quarters

**This savoury bread pudding is the ultimate make-ahead brunch for a crowd. If you like, swap the bacon for chunks of hot smoked fish.**

Pulse the onion and garlic until coarsely chopped. Put a large saute pan on a medium-high heat, add the oil, the onion mixture, the thyme, bacon, half a teaspoon of salt and plenty of pepper, and cook, stirring often, for 25-30 minutes, until lightly golden. Off the heat, stir in the 40g chopped parsley stems and set aside.

Mix the two cheeses in a small bowl, then stir 140g into the cooled onion and bacon mixture.

Lay out the bread on a large tray, spread the grated tomato on top, then arrange in a 30cm x 20cm baking dish, so they overlap a little. Stuff the remaining onion and bacon mixture in between the slices.

Break the eggs into a bowl, add the milk, cream and a half-teaspoon of salt, and whisk. Sieve into a second bowl, then stir in the lemon zest, mustard and a good grind of pepper, and pour all over the bread. Lay a sheet of greaseproof paper on top of the dish, weigh it down with a heavy baking dish, then chill for at least four hours, or overnight.

An hour before you want to serve, take the dish out of the fridge. Heat the oven to 200C (180C fan)/gas 6. Remove the weight and paper, then scatter the remaining 50g cheese over the top of the strata. Cover with foil, bake for 30 minutes, then take off the foil and bake for 25-30 minutes more, until golden. Set aside to rest for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, put all the remaining parsley in a bowl with the olive oil, capers, tomatoes and lemon juice, add a half-teaspoon of salt and a good grind of pepper, and mix. Spoon a quarter of the salsa over the strata, then serve hot with the remaining salsa on the side. →

# Chilaquiles with charred salsa verde

GF

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **20 min** |
| Cook | **40 min** |
| Serves | **4** |
| Cost | **About £1.70 a head** |

**For the salsa verde**
**3 garlic cloves**, peeled
**1½ onions**, peeled and cut into quarters (270g)
**2 green chillies** (20g), stems removed
**1 avocado** (170g), skinned and stoned, flesh roughly chopped
**2 kiwi fruit** (100g), peeled and roughly chopped
**20g coriander**, roughly chopped
**2 limes**, 1 juiced, to get 1 tbsp, the other cut into wedges
**Fine sea salt and black pepper**

**For the chilaquiles**
**3 tbsp vegetable oil**
**8 corn tortillas**, each cut into 8 triangles – I like the ones from Cool Chile Co
**20g unsalted butter**
**6 eggs**, beaten
**½ onion**, finely chopped
**1 tbsp coriander leaves**
**1 green chilli** (10g), cut into thin rounds
**75g feta**, crumbled

**The late, great Diana Kennedy described *chilaquiles* as "Mexican soul food", and I couldn't agree more. They're essentially yesterday's corn tortillas, broken into pieces, cooked in salsa and sprinkled with cheese, making a great brunch dish that oozes comforting familiarity.**

Start with the salsa. Put a griddle pan on a high heat and, once hot, char the garlic, onions and chilli, turning them as necessary, until they are blackened all over – the garlic and chilli will take about eight minutes and the onion about 20. Lift out on to a plate as they're ready, then leave to cool. Once cool, put the garlic, onions and chilli in a blender with all the other salsa ingredients except the lime wedges, add two tablespoons of water, a quarter-teaspoon of salt and a good grind of black pepper, and blitz smooth. Scrape into a small bowl and set aside.

To make the chilaquiles, put a large frying pan on a high heat, pour in a tablespoon of oil, then add a third of the tortilla triangles and fry, stirring constantly, for four to five minutes, until golden and crunchy. Lift out with a slotted spoon and drain on a plate lined with kitchen roll, then repeat with the remaining oil and tortilla triangles.

Once all the tortillas are draining, turn down the heat under the pan to low and drop in the butter. Once it has melted, return the tortillas to the pan, then add the eggs, a quarter-teaspoon of salt and a good twist of pepper, and gently and quickly fold the eggs over the tortillas three or four times, until they're just set.

Transfer to a platter and spoon half the salsa over the top. Scatter on the onion, coriander, chilli and feta, and serve hot with the remaining salsa and the lime wedges on the side.





# Breakfast udon with mushrooms and soy

V

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **10 min** |
| Cook | **10 min** |
| Serves | **2** |
| **Cost** | **About £2.10 a head** |

**⅓ cucumber**, cut into 6cm-long julienne strips (120g)
**Fine sea salt**
**2 tsp rice-wine vinegar**
**35g unsalted butter**
**1 portobello mushroom**, finely chopped (65g)
**2 spring onions**, trimmed and finely chopped (30g)
**1 tbsp soy sauce**
**1 tbsp white miso**
**2 large egg yolks** (save the whites for another use)
**2 x 150g packets ready-cooked udon**
**½ tsp sesame seeds**, toasted

**These are inspired by my colleague Katja Tausig's time working at Koya, a wonderful restaurant in Soho that's rightly renowned for its udon noodles and Japanese breakfasts. This is her version of Koya's *kama tama*, a simple dish of udon, egg, soy and spring onions. I've used ready-cooked udon for ease, but frozen would be fine, too. Have all the ingredients measured out before you start cooking, though, because it all comes together very quickly.**

Half-fill a medium saucepan with cold water and bring it to a boil. Meanwhile, put the cucumber and a quarter-teaspoon of salt in a small serving bowl, toss to combine and set aside for five minutes. Discard any liquid from the bowl, then stir the vinegar into the cucumbers and set aside to pickle.

Put a medium saute pan on a medium-high heat and, once hot, add the butter, chopped mushroom and spring onions, and cook, stirring occasionally, for five minutes, until browned. Take the pan off the heat, set aside two tablespoons of the mushroom mixture, then stir the soy sauce, miso and egg yolks into the pan.

Drop the noodles into the boiling water for about 30 seconds (if cooking them from frozen, give them a minute or two), until the strands separate. Reserve two tablespoons of the cooking water, then drain the udon and tip into the saute pan with the reserved water. Using tongs, mix well until the noodles are coated, then transfer to two shallow bowls. Sprinkle the reserved mushrooms and the sesame seeds on top, and serve with the cucumber pickle on the side.





# José Pizarro
# Ham and eggs, Spanish-style



**Asparagus isn't worth eating at any other time of year than spring,** which is one of the reasons I look forward to the new season so much. Today's dish is a classic combination of ingredients used throughout Spain, where the rich creaminess of good-quality egg yolks meets the deep saltiness of delicious jamón; they make the perfect match for the distinct, bittersweet earthiness of asparagus. There are many other ways to enjoy this vegetable, but, to my mind, simple is best: just three main ingredients make this exquisite dish.

## Asparagus with jamón and crisp fried egg

GF DF

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **5 min** |
| Cook | **10 min** |
| Serves | **4** |
| Cost | **Under £3 a head** |

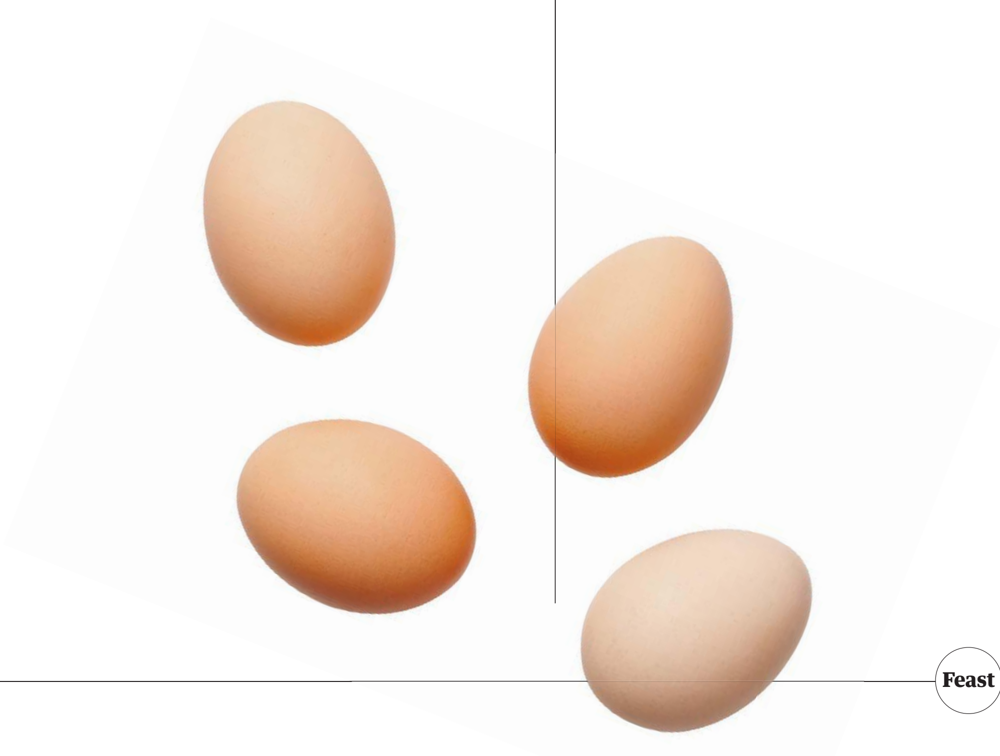
**2 bunches new-season asparagus** (about 500g)
**75ml olive oil**
**4 eggs**, free-range for preference
**75g sliced jamón**
**A good drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil**, to finish
**Flaked salt and black pepper**
**1 handful chives**, snipped, to finish

**If you grow your own herbs, they should be starting to flower around about now, so pick a few of those beautiful purple petals and use them to garnish this lovely starter or light lunch.**

Trim the woody ends off the asparagus, then steam the spears for three to four minutes, until tender to the tip of a knife.

Meanwhile, put the oil in a nonstick pan on a medium-high heat, until it starts to shimmer. Add the eggs and fry until the whites are bubbly and crisp at the edges but the yolks are still runny. Remove with a spatula and pat their bottoms dry on a sheet of kitchen roll.

Arrange the asparagus on four warmed plates, top each portion with an egg and the slices of jamón, then drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil and scatter with flaky sea salt and black pepper. Sprinkle over the chives and serve.



PHOTOGRAPH (INCLUDING COVER): OLA O SMIT/THE GUARDIAN. FOOD STYLING: ESTHER CLARK. PROP STYLING: ANNA WILKINS. FOOD ASSISTANT: CAITLIN MACDONALD. INSET: GETTY IMAGES

# Nancy Birtwhistle
## The £1 store cupboard



**This colourful, satisfying soup is great for those wanting to cut down on their meat intake,** and ticks the gluten- and dairy-free boxes, too. It can be cooked on the hob, or in the oven, slow cooker or pressure cooker. And save the liquid from the tin of chickpeas and whip it up into a deliciously light chocolate mousse for afters.



## A chunky vegetable soup

V VG GF DF

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **15 min** |
| Soak | **12 hr** |
| Cook | **1 hr 30 min+** |
| Serves | **4-6** |
| Cost | **About 40p a head** |

**1-2 tbsp vegetable oil**
**2 onions**, peeled and chopped small
**2-3 garlic cloves**, peeled and chopped
**1 stick celery**, chopped
**1 tbsp mixed dried herbs**, or 2 tbsp chopped fresh herbs
**Salt and black pepper**
**800g mixed vegetables** (eg carrots, sweet potato, leeks, potatoes), all cut into 2cm dice
**½ tsp chilli powder**, or 1 tsp hot chilli sauce or 1 medium fresh chilli (green or red), finely chopped
**100g dried lentils, beans and/or pulses** (puy lentils, red lentils, green lentils, yellow split peas, green split peas), soaked in 300ml cold water for 12 hours, then drained
**1 x 400g tin chickpeas**, drained and liquid reserved for the chocolate mousse opposite
**1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes**, or passata
**800ml vegetable stock** (see method)
**185g frozen peas**

**Save all of the vegetable peelings and trimmings, and use them to make the flavourful stock.**

First, make the stock. Put all the vegetable peelings and trimmings, including the onion skins, any parsley stalks and garlic skins, in a large, microwave-proof bowl, pour on 800ml boiling water, cover, microwave for 10 minutes on high, then set aside.

In a large pan, pressure cooker or ovenproof casserole, heat the oil, then fry the onion and garlic on a low heat for five to 10 minutes, until they start to soften. Stir in the celery and herbs, a hefty pinch each of salt and pepper, and cook for a few minutes, to soften. Add all the diced mixed vegetables, turn the heat to high and fry, stirring regularly, until they start to catch and colour at the edges.

Add the chilli and the drained lentils and chickpeas, then stir in the tomatoes and stock. To cook in the oven, cover with a well-fitting lid and bake at 220C (200C fan)/gas 9 for about an hour, or until the vegetables are tender and the pulses have absorbed much of the liquid and thickened the soup. If using a slow cooker, cook for five to six hours, until the vegetables are tender and the soup has thickened; for a pressure cooker, cook on high for 20 minutes; on the hob, bring to a boil, turn down to a simmer, cover and cook for 40-50 minutes, until the vegetables are tender.

Taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary, then stir through the peas until cooked, and serve in warmed bowls.





PHOTOGRAPHS: YUKI SUGIURA/THE GUARDIAN. FOOD STYLING: HANNA MILLER. PROP STYLING: ANNA WILKINS. FOOD ASSISTANT: ISOBEL CLARKE

# Egg-free chocolate mousse

V GF

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **5 min** |
| Cook | **15 min** |
| Chill | **1 hr+** |
| Serves | **4-5** |
| Cost | **About 30p a head** |

**Strained liquid from 1 x 400g tin chickpeas**, about 180ml (see previous recipe)
**½ tsp cream of tartar**
**45g icing sugar**
**1 tsp vanilla extract**
**100g dark chocolate** (or milk, white or vegan), broken into small pieces
**Sprinkles**, to decorate

**You will need four or five ramekins, or similar, for setting the mousse.**

Put the reserved chickpea water in a bowl, add the cream of tartar and whisk, ideally with a hand-held electric whisk, until light, white and standing in soft peaks (much as egg whites would). Add the icing sugar in two parts, whisking well between each addition, then whisk in the vanilla.

Put the chocolate in a microwave-proof bowl, then microwave on high in two 30-second bursts, until it's fully melted; stir to help it along.

Stir a spoonful of the mousse mix into the melted chocolate to loosen it, then pour the lot into the mousse bowl and whisk to combine.

Divide the mix between ramekins, small bowls or serving glasses, then tap each one on a work surface to smooth them out and release any air pockets. Top with a few sprinkles to decorate, then chill for an hour or two, until fully set.

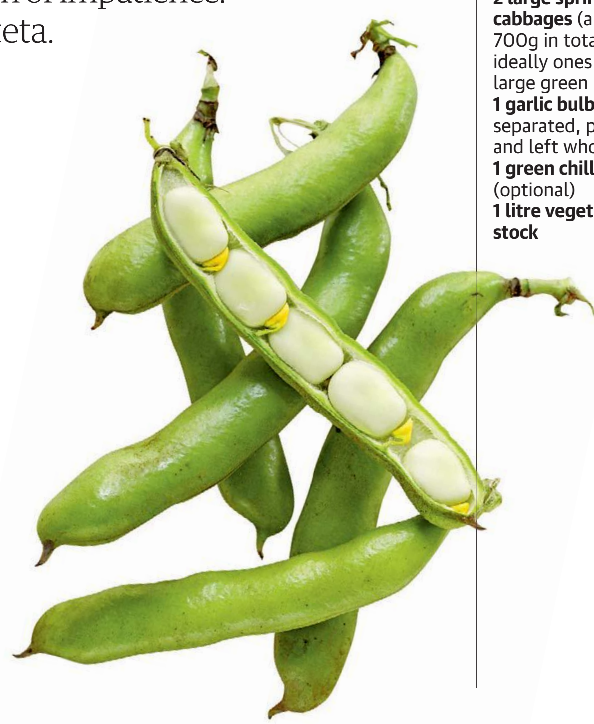
*Nancy Birtwhistle is the author of The Green Gardening Handbook: Grow, Eat and Enjoy (One Boat, £14.99). To order a copy for £13.19, go to theguardianbookshop.com*



# Stosie Madi
# The new vegan



**Stuffed vegetables,** or *mehshé* in Arabic, are among my all-time favourite dishes, and cabbage-leaf rolls are especially hard to beat. As a child, I'd spend many happy hours helping my Lebanese *teta* (grandma) meticulously fill and roll cabbage or vine leaves with gorgeous spiced rice. She always made light work of huge panfuls of delicate, pretty little rolls. I've always preferred larger ones, so often got a ticking-off for not making them smaller and tighter, because larger rolls do not taste or look as good, and are apparently a sign of impatience. She knew me well, my teta.



PHOTOGRAPH: LOUISE HAGGER/THE GUARDIAN. FOOD STYLING: EMILY KYDD. PROP STYLING: JENNIFER KAY. FOOD ASSISTANT: SUSANNA UNSWORTH. INSET: GETTY IMAGES

## Stuffed spring cabbage leaves

V VG GF DF

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **15 min** |
| Cook | **1 hr 30 min** |
| Serves | **4** |
| Cost | **About £2.20 a head** |

**Salt and black pepper**
**200g basmati rice**
**100g cooked fresh broad beans** (frozen and defrosted will do, but at this time of year, it's a shame not to use fresh)
**1 bunch spring onions**, trimmed and finely chopped
**50g toasted pine nuts**
**Zest and juice of 3 lemons**
**50g coriander**, leaves and soft stems chopped
**50g mint**, leaves and soft stems chopped
**2 tsp ground cumin**
**100g vegan butter**, softened (not melted) – I use Flora
**2 large spring cabbages** (about 700g in total), ideally ones with large green leaves
**1 garlic bulb**, cloves separated, peeled and left whole
**1 green chilli** (optional)
**1 litre vegetable stock**

**These can be prepared up to 24 hours ahead and baked the day after; they freeze well, too.**

Fill a large pan with a litre and a half of water, add a good 10g pinch of salt and bring to a boil. Meanwhile, wash the rice under cold running water until it runs clear. Drain the rice, drop it in the boiling water, cook for 10 minutes, then drain and rinse under cold water to cool it down and stop it cooking any further.

Put the beans, spring onions, pine nuts, lemon zest, coriander, mint and cumin in a large bowl, add the cooled rice and season generously. Stir in half the softened butter.

Fill the rice pot with another litre and a half of water and 10g salt, bring to a boil, then plunge in the whole spring cabbages and blanch for two minutes. Drain, refresh under cold water, then carefully cut off eight of the largest leaves and set aside. Finely chop the cabbage hearts and stalks, then stir into the rice mix.

Divide the rice mix into eight. Lay one of the reserved cabbage leaves on a flat surface and put one portion of the stuffing in the middle. Fold over the sides of the leaf, to cover the filling, then roll up the leaf away from you, to seal. Repeat with the remaining leaves and stuffing.

Heat the oven to 180C (160C fan)/gas 4. Melt 50g butter in a small pan, then brush over the base of an ovenproof earthenware dish or oven tray. Add the peeled garlic, toss to coat in the fat, then arrange the cabbage rolls tightly next to each other in the dish. Drop in the whole chilli, if using, then pour the stock over the lot and bake for 40 minutes.

Serve hot or at room temperature, with good bread and/or a cucumber and mint salad.

*Meera Sodha is away. Stosie Madi is chef/co-owner of The Parkers Arms in Newton-in-Bowland, Lancashire*

# Niki Segnit
# Miso meets its match



**Miso is a flavourful paste made from fermented soybeans.** As a rule, the paler it is, the sweeter and lighter it will be. Some maintain that the complexity of its flavour makes it hard for westerners to describe, but I'd beg to differ. Miso is so flavourful that it's hard to stop describing it – you might detect barnyard, nutty, brown butter, caramelised, exotic fruit, olive, briny, boozy or chestnut notes. Miso is especially good with rustic flavours such as alliums, root vegetables and seaweed, but it has some less likely partners, too.



## Carrot
The food writers John and Jan Belleme advise that sweet white miso can be used where you might otherwise use dairy, say in mashed potato, added to tofu to make a cream cheese-style dip, or stirred into a soup. No one would mistake carrot and miso soup for cream of carrot, but the miso does have a pleasingly enriching effect.

## Chives
Scatter a loose mosaic of chopped chives over red miso soup and wait a few minutes – it will taste like onion soup laced with sherry.

## Chocolate
The miso brownie was probably conceived in about 2014, and recipes generally call for a small amount of sweet white miso, which will barely scrape your salted chocolate receptors. Red miso, meanwhile, will deliver a pronounced fermented tang, which is pleasing and authentically brownie-like, because chocolate has many of the same flavour notes. In a ganache, miso and dark chocolate make for an extreme combination of sweet, salt and bitter that I like to spread on a digestive biscuit, which has its own roasted, malty flavours and a hint of salt; its crumbly texture also offsets the smooth ganache. Miso chocolate digestives are going to make my fortune.

## Corn
Mix miso with butter, oil or mayo and spread on a corn cob. The cereal-vegetal, fermented funk of the miso hits first, before the sweetness reveals itself, with the salt teasing out the corn flavours that might otherwise be sweetened into undetectability. Or try miso ramen with a brood of bright kernels nesting on the noodles. The experience is no less enjoyable for being less intense.



## Egg
*Misozuke* are foods pickled in miso, and are usually served as a snack or accompaniment. Carrots, radishes, kabocha squash and cauliflower are all popular. The technique is also used for meat and fish, but my favourite misozuke are boiled eggs, which taste a bit like they've been pickled in gravy. Boil four eggs for six to seven minutes, then let them cool before peeling. Loosen 200g miso with 50ml mirin, then sweeten with a tablespoon of sugar – you're after a consistency soft enough easily to coat the egg, so if it seems too thick, add a little water or sake. Pour into a freezer bag, followed by the eggs, and put in the fridge for half a day to two



PHOTOGRAPHS: LAURA EDWARDS, OLA O SMIT, LOUISE HAGGER/THE GUARDIAN; GETTY IMAGES

days, gently palpating the bag now and then. Tell your loved ones that this is to ensure the eggs are properly covered, although you and I know it's just because it feels nice.

## Green beans

Miso lends a salty meatiness. For two to four servings, simmer 250g green beans until al dente, then refresh. Mix two teaspoons of red miso into two tablespoons of softened butter. Put two teaspoons of vegetable oil in a frying pan on a medium-high heat, add the beans and warm through for a few minutes. Add two tablespoons of finely chopped shallot and a crushed garlic clove, and cook for another minute. Add four tablespoons of sake, simmer until reduced by half, then pour in four tablespoons of water and simmer until reduced by half again. Add the miso butter and warm gently until it has melted and coated the beans.

Miso shares a tanginess with chocolate (above), lends a salty meatiness to beans (below) and can even pep up a drab tomato (top right)



## Honey

Used as a dressing or condiment, *neri miso* is a combination of miso, honey (or sugar) and water (or sake) that has been simmered for a short spell. Its extremes of salt and sweet are so balanced, it's as if your tastebuds have been put into a painful yet very soothing yoga position. Simmer five tablespoons of red or white miso, two tablespoons of honey and two tablespoons of sake or water in a small pan for two minutes, stirring until thick but pourable; you might also like to add two tablespoons of mirin. Make a batch and experiment with popular additions such as nuts, seeds, vegetables and seafood; peanuts and sesame are a much-loved combination in Japan.

## Pecan nuts

Buttery is the most common flavour note for pecans, though it reveals itself late in the chewing. Some pecans, however, have more of a plant-dairy quality, like warm, slightly sweetened soy milk, which makes miso a natural pairing. The combination of sweet white miso and pecan is cake-like, whereas red miso and pecan recalls stone fruit.



## Tomato

Miso has the boldness and richness of balsamic vinegar, and, like balsamic, its pronounced sweet-sourness can redeem average tomatoes. And let's face it, on average, tomatoes *are* average. Dissolve a heaped tablespoon of red miso in two tablespoons of rice vinegar with a pinch of salt, then stir in three tablespoons of rapeseed oil. Slice the tomatoes, toss them in the dressing, then leave them for a good few hours to soak it all up.

## Yoghurt

"Miso-tahini is a vegetarian classic," writes fermentation expert Sandor Katz, "but miso-peanut butter and miso-yoghurt combinations are just as delicious." Fattiness is the key, he says, because it acts as the carrier for miso's "dense, salty flavour". Katz stipulates four parts fatty ingredient to one part miso, with a bit of sourness added for balance – use sauerkraut or kimchi liquor. Even if you don't like them, you can at least bore on for hours about gut bacteria.

*This is an edited extract from The Flavour Thesaurus: More Flavours, by Niki Segnit (Bloomsbury, £20). To order a copy for £17.60, go to guardianbookshop.com*




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# Fiona Beckett
## Tipples for nibbles

I was in Greece the other week for what I appreciate few of you would regard as work, and every winery we visited offered some kind of food at their tastings – usually a selection of cheeses, a few olives, assorted dips and spreads, and addictive, sesame-coated breadsticks. It's much the same in Spain, but rare in the UK, where you'd be lucky to get so much as a water biscuit at a professional wine tasting. The theory seems to be that food somehow detracts from your ability to assess a wine, but why taste it in isolation when almost every reader will probably drink it with food?

Even if you're not having a full meal, it's nice to sit down in the evening with a glass and a snack of some kind. The Greeks and Lebanese have their meze/mezze, Spain has its tapas and Venetians their *cichetti*, while even the French generally run to a few slices of saucisson and a cornichon or two. Wine is just so much nicer with a nibble, after all.

While you obviously don't want to stress too much about finding the perfect match, the fact is that some wines work better than others with certain foods. Anchovies, for example, are much better with a fino or manzanilla or crisp white than with a full-bodied red. Similarly, a juicy red tends to be more enjoyable than a glass of rosé with a slice of pizza. Anything fried and crisp, even a piece of KFC, is brilliant with sparkling wine, just as it is with beer. (I've recommended a really nice crémant in today's pick, but given that it's Eurovision finals weekend, you might want to splash out on a bottle of Kylie prosecco, which generally seems to sell for at least a couple of quid more than the competition. The power of celebrity, eh?)

Cheese is the interesting one in the snacks context. Everyone automatically thinks of red to go with a cheeseboard, but white actually works just as well, particularly in summer, when you might be eating lighter cheeses. Goat's cheese, for example, is a natural soulmate for sauvignon blanc, as you'll probably know already if you've ever holidayed in the Loire, but English dry whites such as bacchus and pale, Provençal rosés are great with it, too. I generally go for a white with a dip such as whipped feta (after my Greece trip, I'm a bit obsessed with the stuff) or my not-so-secret vice, namely Boursin and crackers. An aromatic white works much better than a red with stinky, washed-rind cheeses such as epoisses, too, while a sweet wine such as a sauternes is delicious with a blue. You go for it!

### Wines that go well with a snack




**Williams & Humbert Alegria Manzanilla** £5.75 (half-bottle) Waitrose, 15%. Super-dry and saline. Try chilled with fishy tapas



**Simmonet-Febvre Crémant de Bourgogne** £15 Tesco, 12%. A light, fresh sparkling wine. Goes with fried chicken




**The Society's Greek White** £8.95 The Wine Society, 12.5%. Irresistibly moreish Greek white to sip with your tarama



**Vinos Barco Mencía Menciño 2021** £8.99 (on mix-six) Majestic, 12.5%. An easy, breezy, juicy red. Great with pizza



PHOTOGRAPH: ROB LAWSON/THE GUARDIAN. DRINK STYLING: SEB DAVIS

### The good mixer
## Yuzuito

**25ml yuzu sake** – we use Akashi-Tai Ginjo Yuzushu
**35ml white rum** – we use Havana Club Anejo Blanco
**12½ml simple sugar syrup** (homemade or bought in; they work the same)
**25ml fresh lemon juice**
**Soda water**, to top
**Lemon slices**, to garnish

**While thinking about how to devise a refreshing summer cocktail, I took as a starting point our head chef Daniel McGeorge's menu, which draws a huge amount of inspiration from Japanese cuisine, but is all sourced locally and seasonally. This twist on the classic mojito was the result. The yuzu gives it a lovely, citrus kick that is smoothed by the syrup and soda. If you like, make a slightly tarter drink by replacing the yuzu sake with 12½ml bottled yuzu juice and 12½ml extra white rum.**

Put the yuzu sake (or yuzu juice), rum, sugar syrup and lemon juice in a shaker filled with ice, shake hard, then strain into a highball glass or similar filled with fresh ice. Top with soda water to taste, garnish with a slice or two of lemon, and serve.
*Craig Macfarlane, bar and restaurant manager, Rothay Manor, Ambleside, Cumbria*



# Benjamina Ebuehi
## The sweet spot



**If I'm after a quick, make-ahead dessert that works for a crowd,** nine times out of 10 I'll go for a no-bake cheesecake, because it's so easy to put together and hard to mess up; it's just a case of mixing and chilling. This one isn't sickly-sweet and is brightened with the classic summery combination of lemon and elderflower. Build it in a square tin to make it go further, though it works just as well in a round tin.



PHOTOGRAPH: OLA O SMIT/THE GUARDIAN. FOOD STYLING: BENJAMINA EBUEHI. PROPSTYLING: ANNA WILKINS. FOOD ASSISTANT: ALICE HUGHES. INSET: GETTY IMAGES

## No-bake lemon and elderflower cheesecake

V

| | |
|---|---|
| Prep | **10 min** |
| Cook | **20 min** |
| Chill | **6 hr+** |
| Serves | **9-12** |
| Cost | **About 70p a head** |

**For the base**
**175g shortbread**
**Zest of 1 lemon**
**100g unsalted butter**, melted

**For the filling**
**560g cream cheese**
**90g icing sugar**
**1½ tbsp lemon juice**
**3 tbsp elderflower cordial**
**250ml double cream**
**1 tbsp lemon curd**

**To top**
**150ml double cream**
**2 tbsp lemon curd**
**50g white chocolate shavings**

Line a 20cm square cake tin with baking paper (if you're using a tin without a loose bottom, leave enough overhang to help you lift out the cheesecake later).

Blitz the biscuits and lemon zest in a food processor until fine, then pour in the melted butter and give everything a quick pulse to combine. Tip into the lined tin, press it down firmly and evenly, then chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the filling. Put the cream cheese and icing sugar in a bowl, whisk until smooth, then pour in the lemon juice and cordial, and stir to combine.

In a separate bowl, lightly whip the double cream – you want it to thicken only a little, so stop just before you get to soft peaks. Fold this into the cream cheese mixture, then stir in the lemon curd. Spoon on top of the chilled and set biscuit base, smooth the top and chill in the fridge for about six hours, and ideally overnight.

Lightly whip the remaining cream to soft peaks, then spoon dollops on top of the cheesecake. Make a small dip in each blob of cream with the back of a teaspoon, fill with a little lemon curd, top with shaved white chocolate, then slice into portions.

# Felicity Cloake
## Masterclass: ceviche



**The pleasures of Latin American cuisine are still far too little known in the UK.** Ceviche, which is popular from Panama to Peru, where it's the official national dish, is a good place to start for fish-lovers, because it's quick and easy to make, yet far more than the sum of its few parts. An ideal – and very healthy – starter or light lunch.



GF DF

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|---|---|
| Prep | **10 min** |
| Marinate | **10 min** |
| Serves | **2** |
| Cost | **About £4 a head** |

**½ red onion**, trimmed and peeled
**250g sustainably sourced sea bass or sea bream fillets**, skinned and boned (see step 2)
**½ tsp fine salt**, plus extra to season
**Juice of 4 limes**
**Juice of ½ orange**
**1 red chilli**, mild or hot as you prefer, or 1 tsp aji amarillo paste (optional)
**1 small bunch coriander**, roughly chopped

### 1 Chop and soak the onion
Finely chop the onion (or use a shallot instead or, at a pinch, a yellow or spring onion, though those last two lack the sweetness that makes red onion the best choice). Put in a bowl of iced water, and leave to soak for five minutes while you prepare the fish – the onion will soften in flavour so it won't overpower the delicate seafood.

### 2 A word on the fish
The fish in ceviche is not cooked, but marinated in acidic ingredients that denature the proteins in much the same way that heat would. This gives it a dryer, firmer texture, so it's important to choose a species that's robust enough to stand up to such treatment. I find a firm-fleshed white fish such as sea bass or bream works best.



**4** Cut a fillet of firm white fish into cubes, then salt and mix with soaked diced red onion and citrus juice and zest





**6** Add some finely chopped chilli to the ceviche mixture, then leave it all to macerate for about 10 minutes

**3 Alternative seafood**
That said, even in ceviche's home region, no single species is particularly favoured – inland, freshwater fish such as trout or piranha might be used, while at the coast, tilapia, octopus or shellfish such as clams, prawns and even barnacles are common – so play around as you fancy, but adjust the marinating time to suit both the seafood you use and your own tastes.

**4 Dice the fish evenly**
Cut whatever fish you're using into roughly 1½-2cm chunks – if they're too wildly different in size, the fish will "cook" at different rates. You could slice it very thinly for a more elegant, restaurant-style presentation, but I find this eliminates the pleasing contrast between the soft middle and the "cooked" exterior, so I prefer to dice it.

**5 Salt the fish, prep the citrus**
Put the fish in a medium bowl with half a teaspoon of salt, then rub it in gently – I find it easiest to do this with my hands. Leave it to sit for a minute while you prepare the citrus. Juice the limes and orange (or use limes alone, or seville oranges, when in season) directly into the fish bowl, and add a little of their grated zest, if you like, though don't go overboard.

**6 Add the chilli**
Finely shred the chilli, if using, removing the seeds and pith if you're averse to heat, then stir this into the fish bowl, or dollop the paste on top and toss to combine. (Aji amarillo is a hot yet fruity chilli that's hard to find in the UK, though you can buy it powdered or as a ready-made paste online.)

**7 Macerate for 10 minutes**
Leave the fish to sit for about 10 minutes – traditionally, the marination time was several hours, to allow the acid to penetrate the fish properly, "cooking" it all the way through, but in the past few decades, the trend has been for a shorter soak, so the centre of the fish remains raw. Experiment to see what suits your taste.

**8 Finishing touches**
Meanwhile, roughly chop the coriander (or parsley, if you prefer). Once the ceviche is sufficiently marinated to your liking, check the seasoning, and adjust as necessary (a little more salt, perhaps, or orange juice for sweetness). Stir in the coriander, then divide the fish and its marinade between two bowls and serve immediately.

**9 Serving suggestions**
It's delicious on its own, but you can bulk ceviche out by serving it with a sprinkling of giant corn kernels, some plantain chips (make your own or buy one of the Caribbean brands) or wedges of steamed, boiled or baked sweet potato. It's also pretty good on tacos or with unseasoned tortilla chips, Central American-style.
*The Guardian aims to publish recipes for fish rated as sustainable by the Marine Conservation Society's Good Fish Guide.*

**7** When the fish has marinated to suit your taste – it's best if the centre is still a little raw – adjust the seasoning





**8** Stir chopped coriander into the ceviche and taste again – if it needs it, add a little orange juice for sweetness

**9** Serve the ceviche in tacos, or with plantain, sweetcorn, sweet potato wedges and/or tortilla chips on the side



PHOTOGRAPHS: ROBERT BILLINGTON. FOOD STYLIST: ROSANA MCPHEE

# Kitchen aide
## What can I do with green peppers?

**Supermarket packs of peppers always have a green one – nasty, bitter things that I use only in soup. What else can I do with them?**
***Mel, Evesham, Worcestershire***

This is all too familiar to Luis Gonzalez-Castro, founder of London-based Cuban supper club Cocina Cuca, who "doesn't love their raw, bitter flavour, either". That said, green peppers have always featured in his family's cooking, so he has "learned to appreciate them" – and you can, too, Mel! The road to recovery might start with *aji relleno*, a favourite of Gonzalez-Castro's father: "Cut the tops off a few peppers, gently coat in olive oil, then fill with picadillo [a mix of mince, herbs, raisins and olives]." Into the oven they go and, "oddly, the results are astounding. The peppers soften and, together with the sweetness of the raisins and saltiness of the olives, the bitterness evaporates."

Another who suggests that Mel should, er, get stuffed is Maunika Gowardhan, author of Tandoori Home Cooking: "My mother would do this with spicy, crushed potatoes, and it's *so* good," she says. First heat some oil in a pan, "stir in asafoetida, cumin seeds, green chillies, ground coriander, chilli powder, and turmeric, then add [boiled and] crushed potatoes and season." You'll also want some mango powder "for tang" and chopped coriander, before piling the lot into halved green peppers brushed with oil and grilling them. "They still have some bite when you cut into them, but you get this lovely, charred flavour."

Skewers are another contender to cure a green pepper plight. These, Gowardhan suggests, could be threaded with *murgh malai tikka* (for which chicken is marinated in garlic, ginger, chilli, malt vinegar and yoghurt) or paneer ("infused with saffron, cardamom and fennel") alongside sliced green peppers: "They help secure the meat or paneer, while adding more flavour."

Eggs are another good shout: "An omelette is a very good way to use green peppers," says restaurateur and Feast contributor José Pizarro. "Caramelise onions in olive oil, then stir in [sliced] potatoes and peppers, add plenty of salt and pepper, and fry." Tip in beaten eggs and cook until they just start to set. Flip, cook on the other side for a few minutes more, and you won't notice any bitterness, Pizarro says reassuringly.

Then there's that perennial weeknight saviour, the stir-fry. "If you're using soy and honey to get a sweet-savoury mix, green peppers make a lovely addition," says Paul Ainsworth, chef-owner of The Ainsworth Collection in Cornwall. Otherwise, throw caution to the wind and lean into the bitterness: "They add flavour and body to the right dishes because of their slight bitterness – they're great in a green tomato chutney, for instance."

Miguel Barclay, author of the One Pound Meals series, deploys covert tactics. "Hide them," he says, with sauces being an obvious vehicle: "In Mexican salsas, say, or put softened green pepper in chimichurri or salsa verde – they add a beautiful, earthy tone, and the salsa hides the bitter notes that so many people hate."

**Anna Berrill**

*Got a culinary dilemma?*
*Email feast@theguardian.com*



PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES



# Waste not …
## Over-ripe berries
### Tom Hunt

Save squishy berries from the food-waste bin by making today's streusel muffins, based on the classic German blueberry *kuchen*, which feature a cake base moistened with berries, all covered in a crunchy, crumble-style topping. I've boosted the flavour and fortified the mix by using whole spelt and rye flours with rapadura sugar, though regular wheat flour and sugar will work as nicely. As for the fruit, even a small handful of over-ripe berries will do.

**Berry streusel muffins**

To make the topping, combine 20g wholemeal flour (I used rye) with 25g unrefined brown sugar (I used rapadura), 10g rolled oats, 30g optional chopped nuts, a pinch of sea salt and an optional pinch of freshly grated nutmeg (or a quarter-teaspoon of cardamom or/and cinnamon). Mix in 30g cold butter cut into pea-sized cubes, then set aside.

To make the base, in a large bowl mix 180g wholemeal flour (I used spelt; rye is too heavy), one and half teaspoons of baking powder, 90g unrefined brown sugar (again, I used rapadura), the grated zest of half an organic unwaxed lemon and a quarter-teaspoon of sea salt. Pour in 100ml whole milk, 40g softened butter, a large egg and a teaspoon of vanilla extract, and beat until smooth.

Grease and line a deep, six-hole muffin tray (or an eight- or 12-hole cupcake tin), divide the batter between the moulds and top with 125g over-ripe berries. Cover with a spoonful of the streusel mix, then bake in a 200C (180C fan)/gas 6 oven for 30 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Printed at Walstead Group, Elvington, York YO41 4AU

# Rachel Roddy
## Tales from an Italian kitchen



### Spaghetti with asparagus, butter and lemon

A 10cm x 10cm wooden square with a large hole crossed with wire strings: it could be a tiny harp if it didn't also have another set of 12 strings that cross the first, forming a mesh. Even so, it can be strummed with a long nail, the basic strum audible, if you get in close. Its actual purpose is for slicing puntarelle, the inner tubes of a variety of chicory called *cicoria di catalogna* or *cicoria asparago* (asparagus chicory). A late winter-to-early spring vegetable, succulent puntarelle, with its asparagus-like tips, or *punte*, is a popular salad in Lazio, so the basic, nifty and cheap square cutters (*tagliapuntarelle*) are common and easy to come by in hardware stores. And much as puntarelle migrates and thrives in soil all over the place, so do the cutters. Of course, you don't *need* a cutter; a knife works just as well, only more slowly.

I also know several people who have made themselves a tagliapuntarelle, inspired by the larger cutters you sometimes see on market stalls: wooden boxes or frames strung with wire. Big or small, it is a fantastically satisfying tool, the crisp tubes of chicory cutting like butter into thin strips, or, if you want to keep the tips intact, puntarelle octopi! And it isn't only for puntarelle: celery, courgettes and red pepper work on this tool, too; large vegetables turned into fat strings in two musical seconds.

Last week, while I know I can't be the first to have done so, I did feel like a genius when I pushed asparagus through the mesh. I took off the tips first, so as not to offend them, but later wondered if they could go through, too. Asparagus stems are even more satisfying than puntarelle, because they sail through the wires and splay out like straight tentacles more or less the same proportions as spaghetti. Which is why, if the strips are wilted down in oil and given plenty of butter and lemon zest, they pair so well with spaghetti, for what is a two-tone joy and maybe my favourite recipe so far this year.



String theory: Rachel Roddy's spaghetti entwined with strips of asparagus, butter and lemon

PHOTOGRAPH: RACHEL RODDY/ THE GUARDIAN

Trim the ends off a large bunch of asparagus, either by snapping off the woody ends or paring away the woody parts with a peeler. Cut off the tips, then, either with a knife or a puntarelle cutter, cut the spears lengthways into thin strings as close in size to spaghetti as possible. Trim three or four spring onions, then slice the bulbs into arcs and the green parts into short lengths.

You want to coordinate the cooking so that the vegetables (which take eight to 10 minutes to soften) are ready at the same time as 450g spaghetti (which, depending on the brand, can take anything from seven to 11 minutes), so throw the pasta into salted boiling water accordingly. In a large frying pan on a medium-low heat, warm four tablespoons of olive oil, soften the onion for a minute, then add the asparagus strips and tips and a pinch of salt, and cook, stirring, until they wilt; carry over a ladleful of the pasta cooking water, all cloudy with starch, to help it along – by the end of the cooking, the asparagus should be soft with just a little green juice. Stir 40g butter, two tablespoons lemon juice and the finely grated zest of an unwaxed lemon into the asparagus pan, then drain the pasta (or lift it directly into the asparagus mix) and toss and swish vigorously for a minute, so everything combines. Serve immediately, with grated parmesan for those who want it.

As always, the final stirring is crucial. It's when the pasta, asparagus, starch, fat and pan juices combine and everything comes together, so don't be afraid to swish the pan and stir vigorously. I would also like to apologise vigorously for going on about a kitchen gadget that most people won't have. Which is why this column is also an advert for the various makers of this good-value object and, more importantly, calls to anyone capable of stringing wire or adapting instruments. I am also interested in commissioning a larger model, for both oversized courgettes and strumming practice.

# Grace Dent

## ‘It refuses to be up itself in any way’



PHOTOGRAPHS: ELAINE LIVINGSTONE/THE GUARDIAN



This week’s restaurant has been on my to-do list for about three years now, not least because it sounded so intriguing. Home in Dumfries has a tasting menu with puzzling dish names such as “messy mozzarella”, “steak and lasagne” and “cheese and potato”, which read as if a child had written out the courses for a pretend dinner party, though online reviews suggest the place is actually rather fancy, as well as much loved.

Still, it got sidelined in my rush to the shiny, big-city openings of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen or, well, anywhere but Dumfries. This town of 30,000 is not terribly far from England, so it tends to fly under the radar for both tourists and fellow Scots, who perhaps feel it’s “not Scottish enough”, which is flagrant nonsense. Circa 1605, James I of England and VI of Scotland, ever the optimist, decreed that the vast border area of Cumberland, Dumfriesshire, Selkirkshire and Northumberland should be called the Middle Shires. This new, inclusive, touchy-feely name would reflect the cosy unity he planned to usher in during the 17th century. Scotland? England? Who cares? Lines on maps don’t matter – we can all come together as one! The big, soft sod.

Four hundred years on, and Dumfries is still very much in

**Home**

50 White Sands, Dumfries, 07896 355074. Open Thurs & Fri only, 5-10pm. Seven-course tasting menu only, £45 a head, plus drinks & service



Scotland; the white saltire waves from flagpoles, the accent is gorgeously impenetrable for soft southerners and, when you eat at Home, they begin by giving you a map of all the local farms that supply them. The Ethical Dairy in Gatehouse of Fleet is celebrated alongside Kedar mozzarella from Mouswald, and there are Nith Valley eggs from Gatelawbridge and veg from Loch Arthur in nearby Beeswing. This is an unashamed celebration of Scotland, of its produce and the place that Home's owners, Louisa and Thomas Thorne, call home.

It is also defiantly unswaggering. To book, you call Louisa's mobile. There's no Resy or Open Table to contend with, no fancy website full of loquacious piffle. The name "Home" itself makes it almost impossible to find on Google, and the opening hours are so limited – Thursday and Fridays only from 5pm to 10pm – that you wonder if Home believes it's a real restaurant at all. Yet, once you've found it and been taken to your table while Belle and Sebastian play in the background, it all makes complete sense and is incredibly likable.



Home once lived above a pub, but has now moved into a rather large industrial space titivated only by a few fairylights, some wall hangings, a big, warm welcome and some very good hummus and focaccia. I'd take that over snootiness, chandeliers and caviar any time. Home is indeed, as so many had told me, a restaurant built on pure heart, serving a menu that's at times quite fancy, but still has an utter dearth of pretension, and house pinot grigio at £3.50 a glass. You could blow up to £24 on a bottle of carmenere, but that's where the list peaks (although someone has drawn a lovely mermaid on the single-sheet paper menu).

Then a perfect smoked haddock scotch egg (pictured top) arrives, crisp outside and runny-centred, on an emerald velouté of wild garlic, followed by that beguiling "messy mozzarella", which turns out to be the polar opposite of slapdash. Rather, it's a gloriously executed plate of the innards of a fresh, handmade mozzarella with basil and heritage tomato. "Cheese and potato", meanwhile, turns out to be a classy dish of baby potatoes in an emulsion of something cheddary. Steak and lasagne is exactly what it says it is, albeit designed to complement each other, with the steak on the rare side and the lasagne fried yet still oozing with bechamel – a nigh-impossible task that I've seen many chefs mess up. Perhaps Home is so incredibly Scottish because it refuses to be up itself in any way, including the doodle-covered menu and the Haribo-style sweets that turn up with the handwritten bill at the end.

When it comes to the cooking, however, it's probably one of the best restaurants within 100 miles or more. They'll hate me for saying so, though, because they'll perhaps feel as if they now ought to open on Saturdays, serving their glorious squab pigeon on confit potatoes or the light, sweet, deliriously good honey panna cotta in a jar with a honeycomb-style tuile on top (far left).

"Who is cooking?" I asked Louisa as we settled up. "My husband," she said. "He's very good," I said. "Oh, I won't be telling him," she smiled, handing me my sweeties to take home. "It will only go to his head." This might be the most Scottish thing I've ever heard. Home, never change, please. You are authentically, refreshingly perfect.

## Instafeed




Wildly addictive, not overly fiery chilli oil from Poon's. I've been bulk-buying the stuff



Maybe the north-east's greatest almond croissant from Fab Bakery in Newcastle

**@gracedent**

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The Guardian Newsletters

# WHAT'S ON

13-19 May 2023

## CRANK IT UP TO DOUZE! IT'S YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO EUROVISION



The Guardian

Does Graham Norton really need a jet pack? Will Loreen be crushed on stage by a giant panini press? And will roses be clenched in any buttocks? **Scott Bryan** answers all the burning Eurovision questions

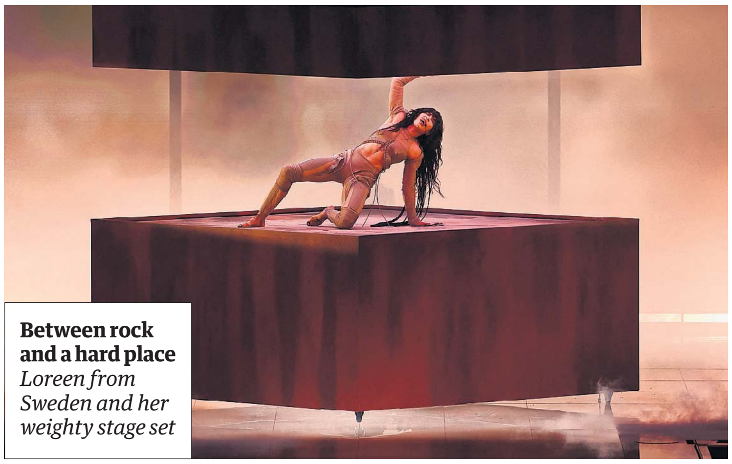
# Jump on board the piggy train!

It's the most exciting, unpredictable, surreal night of television. And this year, it's taking place in the UK. Let this be your guide for the acts to watch out for, the weirdest lyrics and a bluffer's guide to the scoring. Now if you will excuse me … ahem … *let the Eurovision song contest begin!*

## How we got here

Last year's winners were **Ukraine**'s Kalush Orchestra with the song Stefania. It dominated the public vote, receiving a record 439 points (that's the maximum 12 points from nearly every other country) and 631 points in total. Traditionally, the winner hosts Eurovision the following year, but the ongoing war in Ukraine made that impossible. So as the UK's Sam Ryder came second (with Space Maaaaaaaaan), the BBC offered to host.

Although the event is in Liverpool, this is very much a show for Ukraine. Kalush Orchestra will open the grand final, followed by performances from famous Ukrainian entrants during the traditional Flag Parade (which Graham Norton once described as "a new innovation … to make the evening just that little bit longer"). These acts include Jamala (winner of Eurovision 2016) and Verka Serduchka (whose 2007 entry Dancing Lasha Tumbai is the stuff of Eurovision legend).



**Between rock and a hard place** *Loreen from Sweden and her weighty stage set*

Timur Miroshnychenko, who commentated for Ukrainian viewers from a bunker in Kyiv last year, will make frequent cameos from his commentary box in the arena. And alongside hosts Hannah Waddingham and Alesha Dixon will be Julia Sanina, from Ukrainian band the Hardkiss. Norton will also somehow juggle presenting and commentating, with Mel Giedroyc filling in whenever he's on stage. ("Is he going to use a jet pack? Is it going to be on a zip wire?" Giedroyc asked the BBC's Eurovisioncast podcast.)

The interval will also feature a collaboration between six Eurovision icons, from Iceland's Daði Freyr (the entrant for the cancelled 2020 event and the 2021 contest, who wore a green jumper containing a Lego version of his own face) to Liverpool's own Sonia, who represented the UK in 1993. For Eurovision fans, it is a fever dream.

## Ones to watch

Crank up the wind machine … Loreen is back! The winner of Eurovision 2012 is hoping to take the trophy back to **Sweden**, this time with a song called Tattoo – which is currently the hot favourite. It's not as much of a banger as her last entry, Euphoria (honestly, what song is?), but her performance really stands out. A song all about fighting for love, it starts with her lying down between two LED screens, which look like a giant panini press that she slowly prises apart. The screens she used during Melodifestivalen, the Swedish TV show that chooses



**Back in line** *Käärijä from Finland and his dancers*

their entry, were so huge and hefty (reportedly weighing a tonne) that for Eurovision she's having to use smaller ones on wheels, so they can be rolled out of the way in time for the next performer. If Loreen wins, this will be the seventh time Sweden has won the contest, matching all-time record holder Ireland, who failed to qualify.

She faces stiff competition. **Finland**'s Käärijä is becoming a firm favourite. He also achieves a Eurovision first: a mix of electronica, rapping and ballroom dancing. Cha Cha Cha features the performer emerging from a wooden box wearing a neon bolero jacket, singing about boozing ("There's no tomorrow when I hold a pint tightly"). He's joined by dancers with demonic facial expressions who - as the song unexpectedly turns into a catchy sea shanty - form a human centipede, which Käärijä rides like a horse (the dancers refer to this section as a "piggy train"). This is so completely leftfield it might actually win.

Another performance you would only find at Eurovision is **Croatia**'s Let 3 with their song Mama ŠČ. Over the course of three minutes, they strip from dresses to their pants (fun fact: they performed with roses between their buttocks in their national finals). Despite Eurovision banning records deemed political, this anti-war song somehow got through, even though many believe the lyrics to be about Putin ("That little psychopath / War war").

Ukraine automatically qualifies for the finals having won last year, and their entry this time is Tvorchi with a catchy electronica track called Heart of Steel. Also through are the Big Five, countries that pay the most for the running of the contest (yep, it's a thing). This includes **France**'s entry Évidemment by the wonderfully stylish La Zarra, a catchy song that oozes sophistication. And, of course, there's the **United Kingdom**'s Mae Muller with I Wrote a Song, which feels like a commercial pop banger rather than a song put forward by the BBC because it sounds Eurovision-y. It's all the better for it.

Will Muller, who performs last, come up top? It's hard to say. She faces a lot of strong pop contenders, from **Norway**'s Alessandra and her catchy Queen of Kings (prepare for every glass around you to shatter during her high note) to **Israel**'s Noa Kirel who performs Unicorn (she ends with the words "EUROPE, YOU WANNA SEE ME DANCE?" and then, my word, does she follow through).

## The very best lyrics

For an additional level of fun during Eurovision, make sure you turn on the subtitles. It has been a vintage year of Eurovision lyrics so far in the semi-finals. **Austria**'s Who the Hell Is Edgar?, by duo Teya & Salena, is a catchy, hypnotic number about being possessed by the ghost of Edgar Allan Poe (no, really). The song is a satirical swipe at the music industry, with the line "zero dot zero zero three" referencing the 0.003 cents artists commonly receive for each stream of their music.

La Zarra features "In my hell garden, the plants are watered with dreams and tears." Let 3 utter the line "crocodile psychopath", then recite the entire alphabet (of course they do). **Romania**'s Theodor Andrei includes an eyebrow raising "I'm beggin' you, I'm on my knees / Take your clothes off, step on me" in D.G.T. (Off and On). And **Armenia**'s Future Lover by Brunette goes full Alan Partridge with "I just wanna make art, read books and just find someone who likes me enough to kiss my face."

**Serbia**'s Luke Black in Samo Mi Se Spava sings the line "I just wanna close my eyes and just get it over with," which, contrary to what you might think, is not a comment on watching the Eurovision song contest. At one point, he shouts the words "game over" - listen out for the crowd yelling back "BITCH," a word he performed in the weeks running up to the contest but had to cut out.

## Oh God, the points!

As regular viewers will know, there are two sets of points dished out. The first are by juries from each participating country, who award points from one to 12 (but not 11) to countries that made it to the final. It's the part where a representative says "Thank you for a wonderful show!" with an awkward delay and Norton makes barbed comments about all of them. ("Quite the dress. When it's finished it will be stunning," he said about one announcer's outfit in 2017. "Two points for us? Thank you. We'll visit," he said to Montenegro's announcer during a low-scoring year for the UK. Also listen out for his annual sarcastic "Is that Paris?" every time a presenter pops up in front of the Eiffel Tower.)

After this, the public votes from viewers are doled out, who also give votes to countries to a maximum of 12. To add suspense (and, heck, confusion) these scores are grouped then announced in reverse, starting with the country at the bottom of the leaderboard. These lowest-scoring countries therefore have nowhere to hide, with four countries in 2021 receiving "zero points", including the UK.

And just when you have got used to Australia participating, this is the first year that the rest of the world can vote, too. But don't fret! Instead of being able to vote individually, their votes are grouped making the equivalent of one participating country (so 12 points). And, thankfully, they don't get jury votes. I'm not sure we can all stand watching a country like Ecuador dishing out points at 4am.

But the joy of Eurovision is its unpredictability. With so many votes, so many entries (and so much alcohol), you never know how it's going to end. When Kalush Orchestra won last year, beating Sam Ryder, Norton finished his commentary with the line "Probably some relieved people back at the BBC - it looked a bit dodgy there for a minute. We're going to have to *host*?" Fast forward a year, and here we are.

*The Eurovision Song Contest grand final is on Saturday at 8pm on BBC One.*

# Coups, chaos and Conchita

## *The wild politics of Eurovision*

At 10.55pm on 24 April 1974, Portuguese radio played their entry to that year's Eurovision song contest - and soldiers took to the streets. The tune by Paulo de Carvalho was the pre-agreed signal to start an armed coup, and for rifle-toting military to rise up against a fascist dictatorship. Citizens flocked to join in and there was so little resistance that flowers were placed in unfired gun barrels (it became known as the Carnation Revolution). It started Portugal's transformation into a democracy and is surely the only revolution triggered by a crooner with a very large collar.

If you focus entirely on the performances, Eurovision is a bit daft. OK, very daft. According to the results, in 2018 the continent's finest piece of music featured a woman squawking like a chicken. There are rapping astronauts, competitors who perform as half-animal/half-fruit and multitasking grannies baking bread to Euro-rave.

But Eurovision is also a deeply serious political affair. "Even from the very first contest you see politics being played out," says Dean Vuletic, who created the world's first university course on Eurovision. "The first West German entry was sung by a Jewish Holocaust survivor - a clear attempt to distance themselves from their Nazi past. On day one it's being used by a country to change their identity on the international stage."

Ever since, Eurovision has been intrinsically intertwined with international diplomacy. In 1964, Portugal and Spain's participation - despite being dictatorships - saw protests break out mid-contest, with a banner-toting activist having to be dragged off the stage. In 1969, General Franco's attempt to use his country's hosting of Eurovision to (in Vuletic's words) "whitewash his regime" saw him recruit surrealist art megastar Salvador Dalí to design the publicity materials (ie a bizarre poster with a squadron of terrifying, armless monsters). After Turkey invaded Cyprus, Greece hit back via Eurovision, using their 1976 entry to make claims about napalm and mass graves - leading Turkey to boycott.

Sometimes, however, Eurovision has been caught up in a clampdown on freedom of expression. In 2009, the Azerbaijani government interrogated 43 people who were found to have voted for bitter rival Armenia - claiming it was a matter of "national security". It's just one part of a long Eurovision-based war between the two countries, who have an ongoing territorial dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Eurovision has ramped up tensions between the countries. In 2016, the Armenian entrant caused uproar when she waved the Nagorno-Karabakh flag, prompting the European Broadcast Union (EBU) to sanction the Armenian broadcaster. In 2009, an image of a monument near Nagorno-Karabakh's capital city was edited out of the intro to the Armenian performance after Azerbaijan claimed it was an Azerbaijani landmark. The Armenian voting delegation snuck it on to TV by sticking it to the back of their presenter's clipboard.



**Phoenix night**
*Eurovision 2014 winner Conchita Wurst*

Azerbaijan's Eurovision history is also part of a wider trend - allowing increased freedoms. When it hosted the contest in 2012, despite having an atrocious record of human rights abuses, hundreds of citizens were allowed to march through Baku, calling for democracy and freedom of speech. In 2005, when Ukraine hosted, it temporarily loosened entry restrictions for EU citizens - and ended up permanently leaving its borders more open. Conchita Wurst's 2014 entry provoked homophobic protests from conservative Russian politicians and sparked furious petitions in Belarus, Armenia and Russia - yet she won the contest. Her victory may have caused more furore from homophobic Russian MPs, but it also led to the Austrian chancellor announcing his desire to legalise gay marriage.

**After Turkey invaded Cyprus, Greece used their entry to make claims about mass graves and napalm**

Wurst's win did, however, highlight one unfortunate part of the contest: vote-rigging. "A lot of the juries didn't give Conchita the same number of votes as their public," says Vuletic. "These jurors did not want to be associated with LGBTQ+ issues." Last year, six national panels' votes were rejected by the EBU due to "irregularities", leading to a major rule change to reduce the juries' influence. According to Dr Paul Jordan, who worked in Eurovision's communications department from 2015 to 2018: "It's very tricky to prove, but there are certainly some strange patterns, and it's always the same repeat offenders."

For all of this, since 2000 Eurovision has supposedly been a non-political contest due to a rule banning explicit political references. It hasn't exactly worked, given that the 2016 Ukrainian winner was about Russia's deportation of the Crimean Tatar population in the second world war - resulting in a spiralling battle between the two nations that eventually led Ukraine to forbid Russia's singer from entering the country. It's also hard not to suspect that at least some of Europe voted for Ukraine to win last year as an expression of solidarity after Putin's invasion.

But that's not necessarily a bad thing. After all, one of the things that makes Eurovision so captivating is the politics. "It has the power to bring Europe together to express support for a certain issue - be it the rights of sexual minorities or showing solidarity with Ukraine," says Vuletic. "That's why Eurovision is much more powerful than other events."

PHIL NOBLE/REUTERS; PAUL ELLIS/AFP; ROLF KLATT/REX



*Pick of the week*
## Eurovision Song Contest 2023
**Saturday, 8pm, BBC One**

Leaving the coronation in the shade, the real UK event of the year is finally here - it's Eurovision, baby! Our hopeful entry Mae Muller wrote a song (called, er, I Wrote a Song), which she'll perform at the contest held in Liverpool. Past acts including last year's runner-up Sam Ryder, Ukrainian winners Kalush Orchestra and Liverpool's very own Sonia will also light up the stage. Eurovision royalty Graham Norton is back on official snarky commentary duties, this time joined by Mel Giedroyc, while Hannah Waddingham, Alesha Dixon and Julia Sanina will host. We're definitely not going to win but it's still the best excuse for a party. *Hollie Richardson*

## Saturday

*Pick of the day*
### Pointless Celebrities
**5.50pm, BBC One**
Warming up for the big night ahead, this special edition of the quiz that demands pointless answers features contestants who will please many a Eurovision superfan. These include Daði Freyr and Måns Zelmerlöw (Iceland's 2020 entry), Antony Costa (remember when Blue came 11th in 2011? No?) and Eimear Quinn (Ireland's winner in 1996). *HR*

### In for a Penny
**6.30pm, ITV1**
ITV's slightly weak attempt to jump on the bandwagon sees Stephen Mulhern heading to the hallowed ground of Eurovision - Liverpool - for this week's episode of his mobile gameshow. Hopefully, the scouse strollers will have a penny in their pocket for a chance to win £1,000 with tasks such as Pump It Up at a filling station and Check It Out in the local supermarket. *HR*

### The Hit List: Eurovision Special
**6.40pm, BBC One**
You don't hear Mungo Jerry's Baby Jump too often nowadays, but like Oasis's more familiar Some Might Say, there's a connection to the Eurovision theme at hand in this special. Former Hit List champs Scott Mills and Clara Amfo, plus Adele Roberts, are paired with Eurovision fans, competing to bag £10,000 for charity. *Ali Catterall*


*Ten Pound Poms, Sun*

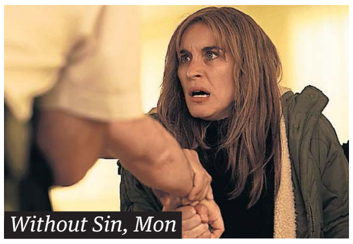

*I Kissed a Boy, Sun*

### In With a Shout
**7pm, ITV1**
Channel 4's Gogglebox showed us that there's a lot of wit, emotion and pathos in observing people watch TV. So obviously ITV had to turn it into a shouting match. Will this week's instalment of the Joel Dommett-hosted competition where families yell at the screen scale the same heights? Doubtful. *Alexi Duggins*

### The One Show
**7.30pm, BBC One**
Rylan recently admitted that one of his biggest regrets was not performing in Eurovision - and yet, as a presenter of coverage since 2018, his name is one of the most synonymous with it. He joins Alex Jones for this curtain-raiser. *HR*

## Sunday

*Pick of the day*
### Ten Pound Poms
**9pm, BBC One**
Danny Brocklehurst's new six-part series about the 1 million Brits who migrated to Australia after the second world war with a £10 boat ticket ticks all the right boxes for a splendid drama. "You don't get that in Stockport precinct," says dry-witted Annie (Faye Marsay), driving past kangaroos after arriving with her recovering addict husband and kids. Glamorous Kate (Michelle Keegan), meanwhile, has ditched her fiance and arrived alone but she's clearly got a fishy agenda. *HR*


*Without Sin, Mon*

### Bafta Television Awards 2023
**7pm, BBC One**
The biggest night in British TV is here, with the Ben Whishaw-starring This Is Going to Hurt, Sharon Horgan's comic thriller Bad Sisters, and gay coming-of-age comedy Big Boys among the many excellent shows hoping to bag a Bafta mask. Rob Beckett and Romesh Ranganathan host the coverage. *Hannah J Davies*

### Malpractice
**9pm, ITV1**
Lucinda (Niamh Algar) is at breaking point as her daughter is in hospital after finding mummy's stolen diazepam in their home and taking it - but even that might not be enough for the dodgy doctor to come completely clean about her prescription arrangement with Rob (who is stable in the hospital and about to wake up). *HR*

### The Big Fat Quiz of Sport
**9pm, Channel 4**
It's a double-Dommett weekend as the comic takes part in this sport-themed version of the Big Fat Quiz format hosted by Jimmy Carr. He's joined by Roisin Conaty, Judi Love, Dane Baptiste, Kerry Godliman and Tom Allen to tackle head-scratchers such as: what sports have been played on the moon? *AD*

### I Kissed a Boy
**9pm, BBC Three**
The UK's first gay dating show is finally here and it is a fabulous feelgood fest. In an Italian villa, Dannii Minogue plays Cupid as 10 single men are coupled up. The twist? Before they even have a chance to tell each other their names, the pairs share a first kiss. But in true dating show style, they are disrupted by a shock arrival who announces: "I'm here to kiss a boy and nobody will stop me." *HR*

### The Man Who Played With Fire
**9pm, Sky Documentaries**
When Swedish PM Olof Palme was assassinated in 1986, Stieg Larsson was a journalist covering the story. The future bestselling author of The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo soon became obsessed with the unresolved case and this slick, cinematic four-parter sifts through his notes and theories. Episode one reconstructs that fateful night and ends on a killer cliffhanger. *Graeme Virtue*

## Monday

*Pick of the day*
### The Stones and Brian Jones
**9pm, BBC Two**
"He was the heart and soul of the Stones, yet most people today haven't even heard of him." For his latest documentary, Nick Broomfield delves into the life of Stones founder and lead guitarist Brian Jones, who died when he was just 27 years old. He uses plenty of archive footage released for the first time, which really brings the buzz of the 60s to life. *HR*

### Panorama: False Diagnosis - The ADHD Scandal
**8pm, BBC One**
Increasing numbers of British adults believe they have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). With the NHS struggling to cope, private clinics have stepped in and, what do you know, some might be more interested in money than accurate diagnoses. Rory Carson poses as a patient to investigate. *Jack Seale*

### Steeltown Murders
**9pm, BBC One**
This bleak but well-handled drama is based on the real story of three young women who were murdered in Port Talbot in 1973 - and whose killer wasn't known until pioneering DNA evidence was used almost 30 years later. The mystery unfolds over four episodes, with an impressive cast that includes Philip Glenister (Life on Mars) and Steffan Rhodri (Gavin & Stacey) as the detectives who reopen the case. *HR*

### Without Sin
**9pm, ITV1**
Previously streamed on ITVX, this four-parter harnesses all the conventions of the classic ITV thriller. Vicky McClure plays Stella, a brittle woman dealing with a dark personal tragedy and occasionally sleeping with her ex. Cliches aside, the denouement of episode one - with its mystery element - might just get you hooked. *HJD*

### Succession
**9pm, Sky Atlantic**
Anyone else physically wince at Tom's nasty jibe about Shiv not being meant to be a mother last week? Ouch. After juggling fire since Logan's death (that is, all the dumb but powerful men she's up against), it feels as if everything is about to go up in flames for her. But there's no time to pause: the funeral is coming up and Kendall is proposing a total U-turn on the GoJo deal. *HR*

### Barry
**9pm, Sky Comedy**
After an audacious mid-season reset, the hitman morality tale starring Bill Hader is now gathering momentum as its ultimate finale looms. Characters both beloved

RAY BURMISTON/BBC; ALED LLYWELYN/CHANNEL 4; CHANNEL 4



Steeltown Murders, Mon

and feared are coming out of the woodwork, with Barry himself headed back to LA after an unexpected furlough. His first stop? A gun shop (never a good sign in this show). *GV*

## Tuesday

*Pick of the day*
### Rebekah Vardy: Jehovah's Witnesses and Me
**10pm, Channel 4**
A world away from the glossy drama of Wagatha, Rebekah Vardy tells her story of growing up as a Jehovah's Witness and says the religion failed to support her after sexual abuse. Vardy speaks with former Jehovah Witnesses, the mother of a man who killed himself after being expelled and an ex-member who has gathered thousands of secret documents. *HR*

### The Greatest Auction
**8pm, Channel 4**
A rare pinball machine signed by the pinball wizard himself, Elton John, and a fork from Saddam Hussein's palace are just two of the (very kitsch) items our millionaires and private collectors will be battling to get their hands on, egged on by host AJ Odudu. Plus, who'll be taking home a vintage "fly-o-plane" fairground attraction? *AC*

### Forensics: The Real CSI
**9pm, BBC Two**
Knowing the horrifically low number of convictions in rape cases in the UK makes this first episode of the latest forensic series more poignant. A 21-year-old woman has been raped in a derelict house in Birmingham - will the team find enough evidence to catch the perpetrator? *HR*

### Colin from Accounts
**10pm, BBC Two**
TV's most excruciating birthday dinner party is also one of the funniest in this week's episode of the Aussie romcom. Ashley takes Gordon to her unbearable mother Lynelle's house for the dreaded occasion, where Darren Gilshenan earns barks of laughter with his turn as Lynelle's creepy partner Prof Lee. *HR*

### Perry Mason
**10.05pm, Sky Atlantic**
The rebooted period drama starring Matthew Rhys as lawyer Mason continues. This week, there are unnerving echoes of modern America as the justice system conspires against Mason's clients, the Gallardos, who go in front of a judge who appears to have made up his mind already. What can Mason's team conjure up? *Phil Harrison*

### Rain Dogs
**10.40pm, BBC One**
Costello has a book deal ("basically Oliver Twist but with big tits") but there's still a long way to go until she finally feels her head is safely above water. She needs to take a council house in Somerset, where she attempts to become a debt collector. Look out for a guest appearance by Karl Pilkington. *HR*

## Wednesday

*Pick of the day*
### Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction
**9pm, BBC One**
"I'm terrified of relapse. If I do that again, everything will end." Busted member, actor and dad-of-three Matt Willis has spent most of his adult life dealing with addiction (he left rehab the day before marrying his wife, Emma Willis, in 2008). Now sober, in this documentary he investigates his past to try to find the root cause, while also putting the spotlight on the people in his life that it has affected the most, including Emma. *HR*

### Designing the Hebrides
**8pm, BBC Two**
Just when you thought your host Banjo couldn't get any more lovable, he sheds a tear thinking about what the farm he calls home means to him. The catalyst is a brief for a gin-tasting bar on a tiny budget. Scavenging for church pews and imagining "a secret door of cheeseboards" lightens the mood as he gets busy. *Hannah Verdier*

### 11 Minutes: America's Deadliest Mass Shooting
**9pm, BBC Two**
In 2017, country star Jason Aldean took to the stage at Route 91 Harvest in Las Vegas to perform to tens of thousands of fans when a gunman started shooting the crowd. He killed 60 people and injured around 800. Here, survivors give their collective version of events. *HR*

### Kids
**9pm, Channel 4**
Growing up in the care system is challenging enough, but what happens when you turn 18 and have to leave? This week, the powerful and often wrenching series embedded with Coventry children's services examines two such cases. Hedonistic Byron seems to relish his independence (at least at first); introvert Bayley is more equivocal. *GV*

### Rookie Nurses
**9pm, BBC Three**
"When I first put those blues on, I got imposter syndrome," says upbeat A&E nurse Mikey. "I thought I was in fancy dress." And yet he is exactly the nurse you'd want, as he proves when he treats a head-and-neck injury. He's one of the seven freshly graduated Welsh nurses in this new documentary series. *HR*

### Naked Attraction
**10pm, Channel 4**
This dating show manages to have its cake and eat it, being both mildly titillating and admirably body-positive. Sam from Melton Mowbray is in search of a superhero-style partner and Tony, a former Royal Marine from Plymouth, is looking for a woman compatible with his dog and his son from a previous relationship. *PH*

## Thursday

*Pick of the day*
### Open House: The Great Sex Experiment
**10pm, Channel 4**
"If you wanna be my lover, you've gotta get with my wife!" It's the return of the reality series in which couples experiment with open sexual relationships - for better or for worse. Curious parents-of-three Chanice and Ricardo and nervous newlyweds Kirstie and Connor are first to enter the mansion, where plenty of horny couples are waiting to join them in the bedroom with fitted night-cams. *HR*

### 24 Hours in A&E
**8pm, Channel 4**
In 2015, a 22-month-old girl was rushed by air ambulance to St George's hospital in London with a suspected fractured skull after being kicked in the head by a horse. That nerve-jangling incident is among the cases featured in this special retrospective episode of the series, characterised by calmness, care and comforting. *GV*



Open House: The Great Sex Experiment, Thu



Rebekah Vardy: Jehovah's Witnesses and Me, Tue

### Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars
**9pm, BBC One**
The remaining foodies duke it out for the £150,000 investment in the semi-finals. How will their social media skills measure up under the watchful eye of TikTok's Uncle Roger? Can they impress a food photographer for a Waitrose magazine shoot? And who'll be left as virtual roadkill after their one-to-one grilling from Gordon? *AC*

### Guilt
**9pm, BBC Two**
"Beginnings are where you find the endings." After three seasons of moral missteps and vinyl-black humour, the superb Edinburgh noir reaches its fraught finale. Irascible brothers Max and Jake are still trying to leverage the megabucks bank sale while staying one step ahead of vengeful crime boss Maggie Lynch. But will anyone get away clean? *GV*

### Taskmaster
**9pm, Channel 4**
There's never been a bad season of Taskmaster, but you know you have a great one when the panellists are making each other roar with laughter. That's the case this week as the five comics review their attempts to repurpose umbrellas, rescue pineapples from a pond and balance heavy items on a jelly. *JS*

### Last King of the Cross
**9pm, Sky Max**
A gritty new Australian drama inspired by the autobiography of nightclub owner John Ibrahim and his experiences in Sydney's "mecca of sin" Kings Cross. It opens with various flashbacks, including John (Lincoln Younes) and his brother Sam (Claude Jabbour) at their crime leader father's death bed. *HR*

## Friday

*Pick of the day*
### The Chris & Rosie Ramsey Show
**10.40pm, BBC One**
The married motormouthed podcasters plough on with the second series of their chatshow. Joining them this week: father and son duo Michael and Jack Whitehall, who are used to sharing their "beefs" with each other on screen and on podcasts. The audience are asked to spill the beans on their relationships, too. *HR*

### Gardeners' World
**8pm, BBC Two**
Getting green-fingered helped journalist Rosie Kinchen deal with postnatal depression, as she discusses in this week's more moving episode. Meanwhile, fancy trying to grow aubergines? Rekha Mistry has some tricks up her sleeve. *HR*

### Hidden Treasures of the National Trust
**9pm, BBC Two**
This wholesome series exploring the nation's historical treasures reaches Sissinghurst Castle in Kent, where there's a struggle to save a clematis (and the beautiful original terracotta pot that has housed it for decades) planted by the writer Vita Sackville-West. Then, it's off to Rudyard Kipling's old gaff in Sussex. *PH*

### Bel-Air
**9pm, Sky Max**
A strong episode of the glossy high-school fantasy sees Will (Jabari Banks) learning a political lesson when he encourages Carlton (Olly Sholotan) to lead a protest against the sacking of a Black teacher: Carlton is an establishment man at heart, and he's been nobbled. Will vows that the revolution will not be compromised. *JS*

### Black Ops
**9.30pm, BBC One**
The cop caper continues with Dom and Kay wondering if Clinton set them on the mission to get dirt on the police and not the gang. There's not much time to ponder it right now, though, as they currently owe said gang thousands of pounds. Might Kay's dodgy youth pastor help? *HR*

### Bump
**11.25pm, BBC One**
This warm Aussie comedy about a teenager who becomes pregnant unexpectedly might not be the most original proposition, but it slips down effortlessly nonetheless. As series three kicks off with a double bill, Jacinda is off to kindergarten and Santi has some surprising news for his daughter and his ex. *HJD*



*Pick of the week*

## High Desert

**Apple TV+, from Wednesday**

A comedy that's funny enough to let plenty of darkness in, High Desert stars Patricia Arquette as Peggy Newman, a drug dealer/addict who decides on a mid-life career change after the death of her mother. Peggy decides to become a private investigator and throws her lot in with deadbeat PI Bruce (Brad Garrett). It's unfocused but that's a big part of the charm; the show has a wild, freewheeling, slightly surreal quality. Arquette is excellent – whether she's roasting her new boss's rent collector or serving divorce papers to her incarcerated husband while tripping on acid, she finds a perfect balance between feisty and fragile. *Phil Harrison*

## The Family Stallone

**Paramount+, from Thursday**

Sylvester Stallone is clearly an unusual man. On the basis of this reality show, in which he attempts to readjust to family life after a long period of filming his recent series Tulsa King, he's an odd mixture of amiable and overbearing. His three daughters have a range of stories about his singular parenting style: as children, he had them doing shuttle runs and golf practice before breakfast. If you bring a boy home, says one, "he becomes full-on Rambo, with guns". And yet there's clearly a great deal of love in the house, too. The result is a predictably cheerful and glossy family drama. *PH*





## Working: What We Do All Day

**Netflix, from Wednesday**

After Michelle Obama's recent Netflix show The Light We Carry, her husband Barack gets in on the act. This documentary series is an earnest attempt to address certain universal questions. What constitutes good work? Do we largely work for fulfilment or to keep a roof over our heads? And are the likes of AI and automation a threat to our livelihoods or an opportunity to recalibrate our lives around post-work identities? Obama hangs with workers in technology, hospitality and care and is a likable and thoughtful presence throughout. *PH*



## XO, Kitty

**Netflix, from Thursday**

A teen drama so squeaky clean it almost looks AI-generated, this drama series is a spin-off of the To All the Boys film franchise in which Kitty Song Covey acts as a matchmaker. Here, Kitty (Anna Cathcart) is on a romantic journey of her own as she heads to Korea to meet a penpal who she's convinced is the love of her life. When she arrives, it turns out things are a lot more complicated than that. Will Kitty trudge sadly home, tail between her legs? This isn't that kind of show – instead, a voyage of cultural discovery awaits. *PH*



## Rolf Harris: Hiding in Plain Sight

**ITVX, from Thursday**

This two-part documentary begins with footage that, at some point in our distant past, probably looked innocent: Rolf Harris talking to Jimmy Savile. Even then, journalist Mark Lawson remembers rumours about Savile; Harris, not so much. Sadly, they had plenty in common, using the trust established by their fame to prey on children. This mixes biography and brave but upsetting testimony from his victims. "He told me I was irresistible," recalls Karen Gardner. "I was 16, he was 48. He was 10 years older than my dad." A tough watch but a worthwhile one. *PH*

## No Escape

**Paramount+, from Thursday**

Trouble in paradise in this mystery drama which, in terms of its premise, feels like a boat-bound version of Danny Boyle's 2000 film The Beach. Lana and Kitty are two best friends, fleeing trouble at home by hitting the road. They find a seemingly perfect refuge in the shape of a group of beautiful young people sailing through south-east Asia, enjoying pristine beaches and full-moon parties. But guess what? Nothing is quite as it seems: soon the girls find themselves dragged into a netherworld of crime, betrayal and murder. *PH*



## Muted

**Netflix, from Friday**

A somewhat overheated crime thriller from Spain: Sergio Ciscar (Arón Piper) hasn't spoken a word since killing his parents. Quite implausibly, he's still being released from prison ahead of schedule – but a team of psychiatrists have been tasked with keeping him under surveillance in case he remains a danger to the public. None of this seems particularly based in reality; the potentially deadly ambiguity that continues to surround Ciscar is a pretty strong argument for keeping him in prison. Unless, of course, there's another motive for his release? *PH*



APPLE; PARAMOUNT

# *Catchup TV*

## *Cliffhangers galore - and a controversial Cleopatra*



### Silo
**Apple TV+**
★★★★☆

Apple TV+'s 10-part adaptation of the first book in Hugh Howey's trilogy of the same name is not for the claustrophobic. It follows the last few thousand people left alive on Earth, who are confined in a subterranean silo while they wait for the planet to recover from whatever toxic event rendered it uninhabitable. Although no one knows when this will be, just as they don't know who built the silo, since a rebellion in the past erased their history. The set designers and CGI wizards have had a field day crafting an environment that's Soviet architecture meets steampunk medieval. The story is equally exciting and, as the plot thickens with almost every scene, equally oppressive. It embraces classic tropes and cliffhanger endings as enthusiastically as it does delicate characterisations and deferred gratifications. Dig in. *Lucy Mangan*

### City on Fire
**Apple TV+**
★★★★☆

Creators Josh Schwartz and Stephanie Savage (best known for Gossip Girl and The OC) have applied brutal but almost certainly correct methods to adapting Garth Risk Hallberg's self-indulgently baggy 2015 novel of the same name into a thriller. They have relocated the action from Christmas 1976 to 18 months after 9/11, the volatility of the 70s replaced by the jittery aftermath of the terrorist attack. It works well as the backdrop to a story that centres on the shooting of a college student in Central Park and opens up to involve characters from a cross-section of New York society. As detectives pursue leads on multiple suspects, it gives us an An Inspector Calls-on-steroids look at the interconnectedness of people and their actions. *LM*

### Mad Women
**Channel 4**
★★★★☆

"The arrogance of men of little count astounded me," says Barbara Nokes in this entertaining jog through the arrival of women in the advertising industry in the 70s and 80s. Nokes's career arc was basically that of Peggy in Mad Men - from secretary to copywriter when her talent became undeniable even to the dinosaurs in charge. She became the creator of the most famous ad of the decade: Nick Kamen stripping down to his boxers to wash his Levi's in a launderette. The male gaze suddenly switched to female. This programme isn't designed to be a deep interrogation of the capitalist machine. It is a celebration - one I don't think I've seen before - of women making inroads into an industry that, despite its vaunted modernity, excluded them from its inception. And those who were there have great stories to tell and great memories to evoke. *LM*

### Queen Cleopatra
**Netflix**
★★★☆☆

The biggest buzz about this docudrama comes from casting a Black Cleopatra. It caused uproar from those who insisted on her whiteness - even though much of her lineage (including her mother's race) is unknown. Its star, Adele James, is also the show's greatest strength, bringing a fierce intelligence to her portrayal. Executive producer Jada Pinkett Smith delivers the narration with such sombre self-righteousness it sucks the joy out of the atmosphere. But the dramatic re-enactments have all the campy fun of a soap opera, and unfailingly outshine the sections featuring straight-faced expertise from academic talking heads. Those who can only see this story in black and white have missed the point. *Leila Latif*

APPLE; ANTONIO OLMOS/THE OBSERVER

# *Audio*



## Podcasts

*Pick of the week*

### Educating Daisy
**Audible, all episodes out now**

Daisy May Cooper's podcast is based on the fact that she hasn't read a book since doing GCSE English. Celebrity guests bring a novel, extol its brilliance and hope to succeed in educating the host. It's a raucous, silly listen. Her guess at the subject of Tim Key's choice, The Diary of a Nobody? "Curb Your Enthusiasm in Victorian times, where he's complaining about shoe shines, penny farthings and the workhouses." Not bad, actually. *Alexi Duggins*

### Rylan: How to Be a Man
**BBC Sounds, all episodes out now**

Rylan (pictured right) completes his evolution from running joke to one of our finest broadcasters with a podcast that muses on masculinity. His first guest is Strictly winner Hamza Yassin, who talks about being broody and why the phrase "man up" should be ditched, as well as answering Rylan's insightful question: "What animal is getting masculinity right?" *Hannah Verdier*



### Believe in Magic
**BBC Sounds, all episodes out now**

From Jamie Bartlett (The Missing Cryptoqueen), here's another thrilling, shocking series that peels back the seemingly endless layers of a scandal. This time it is about a teenager who died after setting up a celebrity-backed charity for ill children - but was she really battling the brain tumour she reportedly had? *Hollie Richardson*

### White Smoke: America's Chemsex Killer
**Audible, all episodes out now**

This gripping, grisly listen investigates Ed Buck, the US millionaire who lured vulnerable Black men to his apartment, gave them huge amounts of drugs and sexually abused them, which led to multiple deaths. It's a troubling tale of how it took years to bring this well-connected Democrat political donor to justice - and an exploration of the phenomenon of chemsex. *AD*

### The Foxes of Hydesville
**Widely available, episodes weekly**

"I invite you to live vicariously through my sins," says Carey Mulligan, introducing her character Leah Fox in this new drama. The tale of sisters who claimed they could speak to the dead drops listeners straight into an atmospheric scene in 1848 when Fox was a spirited, witty piano teacher about to become embroiled in seances. *HV*



## Radio

### Turning Point: First of Millions
**Sat, 3pm, Radio 4**

Louise Brown, the first IVF baby, is now in her 40s and many more have followed, thanks to the pioneering work of the two scientists whose lives and achievements are chronicled in this dramatisation. Facts meet imagined scenes, with Vincent Franklin as "father of IVF" Robert Edwards and Pip Torrens playing obstetrician Patrick Steptoe. Their fight for research funding and more is shown as they worked in an Oldham hospital on groundbreaking research that would eventually bear fruit. *Hannah Verdier*

### Vernon Kay
**Mon, 9.30am, Radio 2**

Big Vern is back in Ken Bruce's old slot - and it's a perfect fit for the man who pleasingly resembles those 70s male models on the front of ironic greetings cards. Alongside regular features such as Record and Album of the Week and a daily music quiz, we're promised sessions from Def Leppard and Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, each accompanied by the dulcet strings of the BBC Concert Orchestra (with a special Bowie cover thrown in). *Ali Catterall*

### Nick Cave: In Their Own Words
**Mon, midnight, 6 Music**

It's Nick Cave night on 6 Music as the long and storied career of the dapper Aussie crooner (and nouveau royalist) gets a full retrospective. Every stage of Cave's creative journey is represented at some point: there are interviews in which he remembers growing up and forming his first band in Melbourne; the Peel sessions recorded by his gloriously feral post-punk combo the Birthday Party; and a chance to track Cave's evolving relationship with Glastonbury festival as his sets from 1998, 2009, 2014 - and his duet with Kylie from 2019 - get an airing. *Phil Harrison*

### In the Studio
**Tue, 11.30am, BBC World Service**

Lenny Henry (pictured above) has created a TV sitcom and starred in Othello but he has never written a one-man play before. This documentary follows him ahead of the launch of his stage-writing debut August in England - a drama about the lives affected by the Windrush scandal. The show claims to be "poignant and hilarious". Hopefully, the same will be true of this profile. *Alexi Duggins*



*Pick of the week*

## Mrs Harris Goes to Paris

**Saturday, 6pm, Sky Cinema Premiere**

After her fashion-house insider in Phantom Thread, Lesley Manville tries her hand at a working-class outsider in Anthony Fabian's beguiling drama, whose lightness of tone can't disguise its egalitarian politics. She plays Ada Harris, a London cleaner whose dream of buying a Christian Dior dress leads her to Paris in 1957 and a culture clash with Isabelle Huppert's clothing boss Claudine. Ada is soon drawn into Dior's financial woes, while charming its staff with her openness and refusal to kowtow. Manville is a perfect fit for the role, friendly but forthright, and the social worlds Ada traverses - from dog track to suave nightclub - are lovingly recreated. *Simon Wardell*

LIAM DANIEL/FOCUS FEATURES VIA AP



## Moonlight

**Tuesday, 11.15pm, BBC Two**
A triple Oscar winner (sorry, La La Land), Barry Jenkins's drama takes a tale of repressed sexuality in a sinkhole of drugs and violence and crafts something tender and beautiful. The coming of age of Miami boy Chiron is portrayed in three episodes - as a kid with a crack-addicted mother (Naomie Harris) and a father figure in local drug lord Juan (Mahershala Ali), a bullied teenager, and a muscle-bound criminal adult. His heartbreaking failure to be true to himself is all-pervasive. *SW*

## Barking Dogs Never Bite

**Thursday, 1.30am, Film4**
Bong Joon-ho's off-kilter debut feature takes a man annoyed by a yapping dog and pushes his crisis to satirical extremes. Lee Sung-jae plays whiny South Korean academic Yun-ju, who locks an annoying pooch in the basement of his block of flats, only to realise he's disposed of the wrong pet. This sets in train a series of unintended consequences for him and feckless book-keeper Hyun-nam (Bae Doona), who becomes obsessed by the canine murder mysteries that ensue. Black comedy spars with social commentary in a style familiar to fans of the director's later hit, Parasite. *SW*



## Air

**Out now, Prime Video**
Like the recent Tetris, this Ben Affleck-directed film takes the true story of a businessman's attempt to get a contract signed and burnishes it into slick comedy-drama. This one is about Nike's fight to make up-and-coming basketball genius Michael Jordan put his name to their trainers in 1984. Matt Damon is convincingly careworn as marketing man Sonny Vaccaro who stakes his - and Nike's - future on winning the player's signature. Viola Davis steals her scenes as Jordan's forbidding mother, while the on-the-nose pop soundtrack buoys up the money moves. *SW*



## The Mauritanian

**Sunday, 10pm, BBC Two**
Based on a harrowing memoir by Mohamedou Ould Slahi, Kevin Macdonald's film benefits from a terrific Tahar Rahim performance as an innocent man caught up in the US government's mission of blind revenge after 9/11. Wrongly suspected of being involved in the attack, Mohamedou is incarcerated in Guantánamo Bay. His inhumane treatment there makes for disturbing drama, but equal focus is given to his long-running legal case. Jodie Foster brings star wattage as his lawyer, and Benedict Cumberbatch is oddly sympathetic as a Marine Corps prosecutor. *SW*

## Marathon Man

**Monday, 10pm, Sky Cinema Greats**
"Is it safe?" Probably best to skip this movie if you've got a dentist's appointment, as Laurence Olivier's most-wanted Nazi war criminal Szell wields his surgical drill in search of information. The "patient" is Dustin Hoffman's New York history student Babe, drawn into a conspiracy involving his secret agent brother Doc (Roy Scheider). John Schlesinger's 1976 film came out when paranoia thrillers were all the rage, and it digs fruitfully into worries about the ways we are governed - and how history can come back to bite us. *SW*





## Baby Done

**Friday, 9pm, BBC Three**
In New Zealand, there's a strain of excellent misfit comedy epitomised by Taika Waititi - and often enabled by him, too. Curtis Vowell's 2020 film is a fine example of the style. Rose Matafeo stars as Zoe, a tree surgeon in a work/love relationship with Tim (Harry Potter alumnus Matthew Lewis). Then she finds out she's going to have a baby and a severe case of "pregnancy negation" kicks in - confusion, denial, tree-climbing. It's a smart tale exploring that point in most adults' lives where youthful and irresponsible tips into grownup and (slightly) less self-centred. *SW*



## Sport

**Cycling**
**Giro d'Italia**
**Sat, 10.30am, Eurosport 1**
Stage eight, a 207km route from Terni to Fossombrone.

**Premier League Football**
**Leeds v Newcastle**
**Sat, 11.30am, BT Sport 1**
At Elland Road.

**Super League Rugby**
**St Helens v Salford Red Devils**
**Sat, 12.45pm, Channel 4**
From Totally Wicked Stadium.

**Premiership Rugby Union**
**Saracens v Northampton Saints**
**Sat, 3pm, BT Sport 2**
The first semi-final. The second - Sale Sharks v Leicester Tigers - is at 2.30pm on Sunday on BT Sport 1.

**Women's FA Cup Football**
**Chelsea v Man United**
**Sun, 1.50pm, BBC One**
The final from Wembley, with Alessia Russo (pictured above) leading the line for the Red Devils.

**Premier League Football**
**Everton v Man City**
**Sun, 2pm, Sky Sports Main Event**
At Goodison Park. Followed by Arsenal v Brighton at 4pm.

**Premier League Football**
**Leicester v Liverpool**
**Mon, 7pm, Sky Sports Main Event**
At King Power Stadium.

**Women's Super League Football**
**Everton v Arsenal**
**Wed, 5.30pm, Sky Sports Premier League**
At Walton Hall. Followed by West Ham v Chelsea at 8pm.

**Champions League Football**
**Man City v Real Madrid**
**Wed, 7pm, BT Sport 1**
Semi-final second leg at the Etihad.

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# Saturday



*Far from the Madding Crowd, BBC Two*

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **10.0** Saturday Kitchen Live (T) **11.30** Mary Berry: Love to Cook (T) (R) **12.0** Football Focus (T) **1.0** News (T) **1.10** Weather (T) **1.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **2.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **2.45** Eurovision Calling: Jason and Chelcee's Ultimate Guide (T) (R) **3.45** The Weakest Link (T) (R) **4.30** Final Score (T) **5.15** News (T) **5.40** Regional News (T) **5.45** Weather (T) **5.50** **Pointless Celebrities** (T) **6.40** **The Hit List: Eurovision Special** (T) **7.30** **The One Show** (T)

**8.0** **Eurovision Song Contest 2023** (T) Graham Norton, Hannah Waddingham, Alesha Dixon and Julia Sanina present the 67th annual song competition from Liverpool, with singer-songwriter Mae Muller representing the UK with I Wrote a Song. Plus performances by Sam Ryder and Kalush Orchestra.

**12.0** **News** (T) Weather
**12.20** FILM **Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie** (Mandie Fletcher, 2016) (T) Patsy and Edina find themselves vilified by the entire nation and have to flee the country. Comedy, starring Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley.
**1.45** **Weather for the Week Ahead** (T) **1.50** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.50** **CBeebies** **7.10** CBBC **9.30** Deadly Predators (T) (R) **10.0** FILM Born in China (Chuan Lu, 2016) (T) **11.15** The Natural World Special: Mating Game (T) (R) **12.0** Family Cooking Showdown (T) (R) **1.0** FILM Summer Holiday (Peter Yates, 1963) (T) **2.45** Natural World: Attenborough's Fabulous Frogs (T) (R) **3.45** Race Across the World (T) (R) **4.45** Flog It! (T) (R) **5.35** Celebrity Antiques Road Trip (T) (R) **6.35** Hidden Treasures of the National Trust (T) (R) **7.35** Dad's Army (T) (R)

**8.05** FILM **Far from the Madding Crowd** (Thomas Vinterberg, 2015) (T) A Victorian woman struggling to maintain her independence attracts the attention of three very different men. Period drama, starring Carey Mulligan, Matthias Schoenaerts, Tom Sturridge and Michael Sheen.

**10.0** **Match of the Day** (T) With Leeds v Newcastle and Aston Villa v Tottenham.
**11.20** **Live at the Apollo** (T) (R) Standup from Zoe Lyons, Ria Lina and Tom Ward.
**12.05** **Sam Ryder Rocks** (T) **1.05** Pride Hits at the BBC (T) (R) **2.05** FILM Who You Think I Am (Safy Nebbou, 2018) **3.40** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **CITV** **8.25** News (T) **8.30** Oti Mabuse's Breakfast Show (T) **9.25** James Martin's Saturday Morning (T) **11.35** John and Lisa's Weekend Kitchen (T) **12.40** News and Weather (T) **1.0** Extreme E Live (T) **3.0** You've Been Framed! (T) (R) **3.30** Tipping Point: Best Ever Finals (T) (R) **4.0** FILM Peter Pan (PJ Hogan, 2003) (T) **6.05** News and Weather (T) **6.20** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** **In for a Penny** (T) **7.0** **In With a Shout** (T)

**8.0** FILM **Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom** (JA Bayona, 2018) (T) Three years after the destruction of Jurassic World, Owen and Claire return to the theme park to save its dinosaurs from the island's active volcano. Action sequel, starring Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Rafe Spall and Toby Jones.

**10.20** **News** (T) Weather
**10.40** FILM **Total Recall** (Paul Verhoeven, 1990) (T) A construction worker travels to Mars to uncover his true identity. Sci-fi thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger.
**12.45** **Shop: Ideal World** **3.0** Unwind With ITV (T) **4.15** Love Your Weekend (T) (R)

## Channel 4

**6.0** **Everybody Loves Raymond** (T) (R) **7.10** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.30** Frasier (T) (R) **9.30** The Simpsons (T) (R) **12.45** Live Super League Rugby (T) St Helens v Salford Red Devils (kick-off 1pm). **3.15** Four in a Bed (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Raising the Mary Rose: The Lost Tapes (T) (R) **7.30** Falklands War: The Untold Story (T) (R)

**9.0** FILM **Jack Reacher: Never Go Back** (Edward Zwick, 2016) (T) The vigilante tries to save an army major who has been framed for murder by a sinister conspiracy. Action thriller sequel, starring Tom Cruise, Cobie Smulders, Danika Yarosh and Aldis Hodge.

**11.20** FILM **xXx: The Return of Xander Cage** (DJ Caruso, 2017) (T) Action thriller, starring Vin Diesel.
**1.20** **The Simpsons** (T) (R) **1.45** The Simpsons (T) (R) **2.10** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **3.0** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **5.05** The Great British Dig: History in Your Back Garden (T) (R) **5.55** Cheers (T) (R)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake!** **10.0** The Smurfs (T) **10.10** Entertainment News (T) **10.20** FILM Escape to Victory (John Huston, 1981) (T) **12.45** FILM The Dam Busters (Michael Anderson, 1955) (T) **3.20** FILM Enemy of the State (Tony Scott, 1998) (T) **6.0** News (T) **6.10** Kensington Palace: Upstairs, Downstairs (T) (R)

**8.0** **The Lost Stonehenge: An Ancient Mystery** (T) (R) Documentary about the discovery of a submerged, 9,000-year-old stone circle off the coast of Israel.
**9.0** **Tutankhamun's Tomb: The Discovery With Dan Snow** (T) (R) The history of the exploration of Egypt's Valley of the Kings.

**10.25** FILM **The Magnificent Seven** (Antoine Fuqua, 2016) (T)
**1.0** **Teleshopping** (T) **3.0** Walking Britain's Lost Railways (T) (R) **3.50** Cruising With Jane McDonald (T) (R) **4.35** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.30** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R) **5.40** Pip and Posy (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **Sahara With Michael Palin** (T) (R) The final leg through Tunisia, Libya and Algeria, before returning to Gibraltar. Last in the series.

**8.0** **Himalaya With Michael Palin** (T) (R) Michael watches Gurkha recruits being put through their paces.
**9.0** **Inspector Montalbano** (T) (R) Feature-length final episode. Montalbano grapples with the murder of the leader of an amateur dramatics company with a peculiar take on theatre.

**11.0** **The Bermuda Triangle: Beneath the Waves** (T) (R) Bruce Denardo explores the legend of the region.
**12.0** **David Attenborough: A Life on Air** (T) (R) **1.0** Sykes (T) (R) **1.30** Sykes (T) (R) **2.0** Eric Sykes: One of the Great Troupers (T) (R) **2.45** Himalaya With Michael Palin (T) (R)

# Other channels

### BBC Three

**7.0pm** EastEnders **7.30** EastEnders **8.0** Top Gear **9.0** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **9.30** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **10.0** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **10.30** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **11.0** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **12.0** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **1.0** Made Up in Belfast **1.30** Made Up in Belfast **2.0** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **2.30** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **3.0** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps **3.30** Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps

### Dave

**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Lazy Boy Garage **8.0** Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul **9.0** Red Bull Soapbox Race 2018 **11.0** Storage Hunters UK **11.30** Storage Hunters UK **12.0** Storage Hunters UK **12.30** Storage Hunters UK **1.0** Red Dwarf **1.40** Red Dwarf **2.20** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **4.20** Richard Osman's House of Games **5.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **5.40** Would I Lie to You? At Christmas **6.20** Would I Lie to You? **7.0** Red Bull Soapbox Race **8.0** Not Going Out **8.40** Not Going Out **9.20** Not Going Out Bloopers Special **10.0** Mock the Week **11.20** QI XL **12.20** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **1.15** Live at the Apollo **2.20** Not Going Out **2.50** Not Going Out **3.20** Not Going Out Bloopers Special **4.0** Teleshopping

### E4

**6.0am** Modern Family **6.25** Lego Masters **7.25** Don't Tell the Bride **8.25** Made in Chelsea **9.25** Modern Family **9.55** Modern Family **10.25** Modern Family **10.55** Modern Family **11.25** Modern Family **11.55** The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer **12.55** FILM The Karate Kid (1984) **3.20** The Big Bang Theory **3.50** The Big Bang Theory **4.20** The Big Bang Theory **4.50** The Big Bang Theory **5.20** The Big Bang Theory **5.50** The Big Bang Theory **6.15** The Big Bang Theory **6.40** The Big Bang Theory **7.15** FILM Shrek the Third (2007) **9.0** Celebrity Gogglebox **10.0** Gogglebox **12.10** First Dates **1.15** First Dates **2.20** Celebrity Gogglebox **3.15** Gogglebox **4.10** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA

### Film4

**11.0am** FILM Hotel for Dogs (2009) **1.05** FILM Barnyard (2006) **2.50** FILM Failure to Launch (2006) **4.40** FILM Tooth Fairy (2010) **6.45** FILM Star Trek: Nemesis (2002) **9.0** FILM The Book of Eli (2010) **11.15** FILM Minor Premise (2020) **1.20** FILM Total Recall (2012)

### ITV2

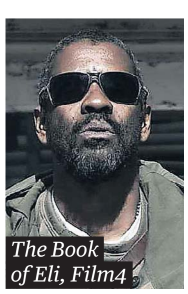
**6.0am** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **6.35** Secret Crush **7.35** Celebrity Dinner Date **8.25** Dress to Impress **11.30** Catchphrase Celebrity Special **12.35** In for a Penny **1.05** FILM The Mitchells vs the Machines (2021) **3.10** FILM The Croods (2013) **5.10** FILM The Addams Family (2019) **6.55** FILM Yes Man (2008) **9.0** FILM Fast & Furious 7 (2015) **11.45** Family Guy **12.15** Family Guy **12.40** American Dad! **1.10** American Dad! **1.35** All American **2.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max

**6.0am** Highway Patrol **8.0** The Flash **9.0** The Flash **10.0** The Flash **11.0** The Flash **12.0** NCIS: New Orleans **4.0** Hawaii Five-0 **5.0** Hawaii Five-0 **6.0** Hawaii Five-0 **7.0** Hawaii Five-0 **8.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **9.0** Flintoff: Lord of the Fries **10.0** A League of Their Own: European Road Trip **11.0** Bel-Air **11.55** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **12.40** Resident Alien **1.35** Road Wars **2.0** S.W.A.T. **3.0** NCIS: Los Angeles **4.0** The Flash

### Sky Arts

**6.0am** Tchaikovsky, Swan Lake **8.30** Tales of the Unexpected **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.30** Tales of the Unexpected **11.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **12.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **12.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **1.0** Gil Scott-Heron: Pieces of a Man **2.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **3.0** Frank Sinatra & Gene Kelly: Ol' Blue Eyes Is Back **4.05** Dean Martin: A Legend in Concert **5.0** Guy Garvey: From the Vaults **6.0** Guy Garvey: From the Vaults **7.0** Simon & Garfunkel: Concert in Central Park **9.0** Queen: Live at Wembley Stadium **10.20** The Story of Bohemian Rhapsody **11.40** FILM Freddie Mercury: The Untold Story (2000) **1.0** United Kingdom of Pop **2.10** United Kingdom of Pop **3.20** Women Who Rock **4.35** Discovering: Janis Joplin **5.0** Discovering: The Who **5.30** Discovering: Jimi Hendrix



*The Book of Eli, Film4*

### Sky Atlantic

**6.0am** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **8.55** The Wire **10.05** The Wire **2.35** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **1.25** Sharp Objects **2.30** Catherine the Great **3.35** In Treatment **4.05** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets

# Radio

### Radio 3

**7.0am** Breakfast. With Elizabeth Alker. **9.0** Record Review. Mark Lowther chooses his favourite recording of Sibelius's Symphony No 6. **11.45** Music Matters **12.30** This Classical Life. Jess Gillam chats to folk musician Hazel Askew. **1.0** Inside Music. Soprano Lise Davidsen chooses a selection of pieces. **3.0** Sound of Cinema. Music from films tackling the issue of overpopulation. **4.0** Music Planet. A look at the winners of the Songlines music awards. **5.0** J to Z. With a live session by vibraphonist Simon Moullier. **6.30** Opera on 3. A New York Metropolitan Opera production of Puccini's La Bohème, with Eleonora Buratto (soprano: Mimi), Stephen Costello (tenor: Rodolfo), Sylvia D'Eramo (soprano: Musetta), Davide Luciano (baritone: Marcello), Alexey Lavrov (baritone: Schaunard), Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. **10.0** New Music Show. More performances from Tectonics Glasgow. **12.0** Freeness **1.0** Through the Night

### Radio 4

**6.0am** News and Papers **6.07** Open Country. Helen Mark visits Coleshill in Oxfordshire. (R) **6.30** Farming Today This Week **6.57** Weather **7.0** Today. Presented by Nick Robinson and Justin Webb. **9.0** Saturday Live **10.0** Your Place Or Mine. Jameela Jamil sells Shaun Keaveny on the delights of Los Angeles. (6/13) **10.30** The Kitchen Cabinet. Jay Rayner presents the culinary panel show. (4/6) **11.0** The Week in Westminster **11.30** From Our Own Correspondent **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Money Box **12.30** The News Quiz (R) **12.57** Weather **1.0** News **1.10** Any Questions? (R) **2.0** Any Answers? Listeners have their say on the week's big issues. **2.45** The Museums That Make Us. Neil MacGregor tours Britain's museums, starting in Stowe, Buckinghamshire. (1/20) (R) **3.0** **Turning Point: First of Millions** Ryan Craig's fact-based medical drama about the birth of the first IVF baby. **4.0** Weekend Woman's Hour **5.0** Saturday PM. Presented by Caroline Wyatt. **5.30** Political Thinking With Nick Robinson. An interview with a major political figure. (1/8) **5.54** Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.15** Loose Ends. Clive Anderson and Scottee are joined by David Baddiel, William Hartston, Priyanga Burford and Megan McCubbin. With music from Carminho and Mariachi Las Adelitas. **7.0** Profile **7.15** This Cultural Life. John Wilson talks to artist duo Gilbert & George. (7/12) **8.0** Archive on 4: Whatever Happened to JB Priestley? Stuart Maconie rekindles interest in the often overlooked writer. **9.0** GF Newman's The Corrupted. Brian is back in jail and decides to join a hardened convict who is planning an escape. (9/10) (R) **9.45** From Fact to Fiction (R) **10.0** News **10.15** Bringing Up Britain (R) **11.0** Round Britain Quiz (R) **11.30** Uncanny. A soldier in the Irish Defence Forces saved by a ghost. (6/12) **12.0** Midnight News **12.15** Bird Brain of Britain (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Bells on Sunday. From St Dunstan, Stepney. **5.45** Profile (R)

### Radio 4 Extra

**6.0am** Hercule Poirot: After the Funeral **7.30** On Truth Omnibus (1/1) **8.35** Inheritance Tracks **8.45** The Fosdyke Saga (2/13) **9.0** Benny Hill Time **9.30** Whack-O! **10.0** Writing: The Midlands (2/3) **11.0** Hercule Poirot: After the Funeral **12.30** On Truth Omnibus (1/1) **1.35** Inheritance Tracks **1.45** The Fosdyke Saga (2/13) **2.0** Benny Hill Time **2.30** Whack-O! **3.0** Writing: The Midlands (2/3) **4.0** The Lodestone (2/5) **4.45** Someone Like You (2/5) **5.0** Hercule Poirot **6.30** On Truth Omnibus (1/1) **7.35** Inheritance Tracks **7.45** The Fosdyke Saga (2/13) **8.0** Benny Hill Time **8.30** Whack-O! **9.0** Writing: The Midlands (2/3) **10.0** Nick Mohammed in Bits (3/4) **10.30** Mark Watson Makes the World Substantially Better (4/6) **11.0** Vent (2/6) **11.30** Life: An Idiot's Guide (2/6) **12.0** Night Watch (5/5) **12.30** The Golden Apples of the Sun (2/4) **1.0** Hercule Poirot **2.30** On Truth Omnibus (1/1) **3.35** Inheritance Tracks **3.45** The Fosdyke Saga (2/13) **4.0** Benny Hill Time **4.30** Whack-O! **5.0** Writing: The Midlands (2/3)

# Sunday



*Bafta Television Awards 2023, BBC One*

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **7.35** Match of the Day (T) (R) **9.0** Sunday With Laura Kuenssberg (T) **10.0** Politics England (T) **10.30** Animal Park (T) (R) **11.0** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.0** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **12.45** Points of View (T) **1.0** News (T) **1.10** Weather (T) **1.15** Songs of Praise (T) **1.50** MOTD Live: Women's FA Cup Final (T) Chelsea v Man United (kick-off 2.30pm). **5.05** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.35** News (T) **5.50** Regional News and Weather (T) **6.0** Countryfile (T) **7.0** **Bafta Television Awards 2023** (T)

**9.0** **Ten Pound Poms** (T) New series. Drama about British immigrants to Australia in the 1950s, who quickly discover that life in their new home isn't quite what they were sold. Starring Faye Marsay, Michelle Keegan, Warren Brown and Leon Ford.

**10.0** **News** (T)
**10.25** **Regional News** (T) Weather
**10.30** **Match of the Day 2** (T) Everton v Man City and Arsenal v Brighton.
**11.35** **MOTD Top 10: Penalty Takers** (T) Football chat.
**12.05** FILM **Mindhorn** (Sean Foley, 2016) (T) Comedy, starring Julian Barratt. **1.30** Weather (T) **1.35** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.35** **Gardeners' World** (T) (R) **7.35** Countryfile (T) (R) **8.30** Beechgrove Garden (T) (R) **9.0** Landward (T) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites (T) **11.0** Family Cooking Showdown (T) (R) **12.0** Food & Drink (T) (R) **12.30** Dames: Talking Pictures (T) (R) **1.15** FILM Tea With Mussolini (Franco Zeffirelli, 1999) (T) **3.05** Flog It! (T) (R) **4.0** Race Across the World (T) (R) **5.0** Commando: Britain's Ocean Warriors (T) (R) **6.0** The Hairy Bikers' Mediterranean Adventure (T) (R) **7.0** Inside the Factory (T) (R)

**8.0** **Antiques Roadshow** (T) (R) Fiona Bruce presents the show from Ulster Folk Museum near Belfast.

**9.0** **Simon Reeve's South America** (T) (R) Simon travels through Brazil, visiting a neighbourhood in Manaus and meeting a nurse who was the only source of healthcare during the pandemic.

**10.0** FILM **The Mauritanian** (Kevin Macdonald, 2021) (T) Fact-based legal drama, starrring Jodie Foster, Tahar Rahim and Benedict Cumberbatch.
**12.05** **The Chris & Rosie Ramsey Show** (T) (R) **12.50** Sign Zone: Question Time (T) (R) **1.50** Last Woman on Earth With Sara Pascoe (T) (R) **2.50** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **CITV** **8.25** News (T) **8.30** Laura Whitmore's Breakfast Show (T) **9.25** Love Your Weekend With Alan Titchmarsh (T) **11.25** Love Your Garden (T) (R) **11.55** The Masked Singer US (T) (R) **12.50** News and Weather (T) **1.0** Extreme E Live (T) **3.0** You've Been Framed! (T) (R) **3.30** Tipping Point: Best Ever Finals (T) (R) **4.0** FILM Goldfinger (Guy Hamilton, 1964) (T) **6.10** News and Weather (T) **6.30** Local News (T) **6.40** Family Fortunes (T) **7.40** Britain's Got Talent (T)

**9.0** **Malpractice** (T) Lucinda is contacted by someone who is prepared to expose her recent actions unless she cooperates. Norma and George are stunned at their recent discovery, and Tom wonders where his wife was when he needed her most. Medical thriller, starring Niamh Algar.

**10.0** **News** (T) Weather
**10.20** **Long Lost Family** (T) (R)
**11.15** **Premiership Rugby Union Highlights** (T) (R) David Flatman and Topsy Ojo present action from the semi-finals.
**12.15** **Shop: Ideal World** **3.0** Motorsport UK (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Food We Love (T) (R)

## Channel 4

**6.20** **Cheers** (T) (R) **7.15** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.30** The Simpsons (T) (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch (T) **12.30** The Simpsons (T) (R) **2.20** The Dog House (T) (R) **3.25** Britain By Beach (T) (R) **4.25** Devon and Cornwall (T) (R) **5.30** Billionaire Blooms (T) **6.30** News (T) **7.0** Escape to the Chateau (T) (R)

**8.0** **The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer** (T) James McAvoy, Anne-Marie, David Baddiel and Kelly Holmes enter the tent.

**9.0** **The Big Fat Quiz of Sport** (T) Jimmy Carr hosts, with panellists Roisin Conaty, Judi Love, Joel Dommett, Dane Baptiste, Kerry Godliman and Tom Allen.

**11.0** **Gogglebox** (T) (R)
**12.05** **Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA** (T) (R) **1.0** FILM Tolkien (Dome Karukoski, 2019) (T) Biopic of the author, starring Nicholas Hoult. **2.55** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **3.20** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **5.05** Jamie's Comfort Food (T) (R) **5.15** Moneybags (T)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake!** **10.0** The Smurfs (T) **10.10** SpongeBob SquarePants (T) (R) **10.30** Police Interceptors (T) (R) **12.30** FILM Rio Lobo (Howard Hawks, 1970) (T) **2.50** FILM Waterworld (Kevin Reynolds, 1995) (T) **5.30** News (T) **5.35** Britain's Best Places to Live 2023 (T) **7.30** Challenge Anneka: Dementia Special (T)

**9.0** **Rich House, Poor House: Millionaire Special** (T) A woman who inherited Muncaster Castle and estate in Cumbria swaps lives with a self-made Liverpool businesswoman from a working-class background.

**10.0** **The Teacher With Tourette's** (T) Natalie Davidson tries to help people with extreme cases of Tourette's.
**10.55** FILM **Kiss the Girls** 1997) (T)
**1.10** **Teleshopping** (T) **3.10** Walking Britain's Lost Railways (T) (R) **3.55** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **Francesco's Italy: Top to Toe** (T) (R) Francesco da Mosto explores the south of Italy.

**8.0** **The Tragedy of Macbeth** (T) James McArdle and Saoirse Ronan star in the critically acclaimed stage production of Shakespeare's "Scottish play", about a couple's spine-chilling quest for power, directed by Yael Farber and captured during its 2021 run at the Almeida theatre in London.

**10.35** **Imagine: Gilbert and George – No Surrender** (T) (R) Alan Yentob examines the work of artists Gilbert and George as they prepare for a Tate Modern retrospective.
**11.25** **Ian Hislop's Fake News: A True History** (T) (R)
**12.25** **Berlin 1945** (T) (R) **1.20** Francesco's Italy (T) (R) **2.20** Animal Einsteins (T) (R)

## Other channels

### BBC Three

**7.0pm** EastEnders **7.30** EastEnders **8.0** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **8.30** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **9.0** **I Kissed a Boy** **9.45** FILM Easy A (2010) **11.15** Search Party **11.45** Search Party **12.15** I Kissed a Boy **1.0** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **2.0** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **2.30** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **3.0** Hire Me: Competing for a Dream Job **3.30** My Mate's a Bad Date

### Dave

**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Lazy Boy Garage **7.35** Lazy Boy Garage **8.0** Rick Stein's India **9.0** Abandoned Engineering **10.0** Abandoned Engineering **11.0** Top Gear **12.0** Top Gear **1.0** James May's Cars of the People **2.0** James May's Cars of the People **3.0** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **3.40** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **4.20** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **5.0** Red Bull Soapbox Race **6.0** Red Bull Soapbox Race **7.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **8.0** QI XL **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** Meet the Richardsons **10.40** Live at the Apollo **11.40** QI **12.20** Red Dwarf **1.0** Red Dwarf **1.40** Red Dwarf **2.15** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **2.40** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.05** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.40** The Indestructibles **4.0** Teleshopping

### E4

**6.0am** Hollyoaks Omnibus **8.25** Don't Tell the Bride **9.25** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **10.25** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **11.25** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **12.25** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **1.25** FILM The Karate Kid Part II (1986) **3.35** FILM Sonic the Hedgehog (2020) **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** The Big Bang Theory **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** The Big Bang Theory **8.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.0** Absolutely Dyer: Danny and Dani Do Italy **10.0** Gogglebox **11.05** FILM Ghost in the Shell (2017) **1.05** Naked Attraction **2.10** Absolutely Dyer: Danny and Dani Do Italy **3.10** Modern Family **3.35** Hollyoaks Omnibus

### Film4

**11.0am** FILM Ferdinand (2017) **1.10** FILM The War With Grandpa (2021) **3.05** FILM The Addams Family (1991) **5.05** FILM Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (2014) **7.10** FILM Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey (1991) **9.0** FILM Under Siege (1992) **11.05** FILM Old Boys (2018) **1.0** FILM My Golden Days (2015)

### ITV2

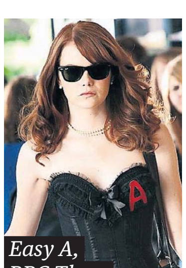
**6.0am** Unwind With ITV **6.25** Secret Crush **9.15** Dress to Impress **11.20** Family Fortunes **12.25** Celebrity Catchphrase **1.25** In for a Penny **1.55** FILM Stuart Little 2 (2002) **3.35** FILM The Smurfs (2011) **5.40** FILM Marley & Me (2008) **8.0** FILM Shanghai Noon (2000) **10.10** Family Guy **10.40** Family Guy **11.10** Family Guy **11.40** American Dad! **12.05** American Dad! **12.35** All American **1.30** Hell's Kitchen **2.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.55** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max

**6.0am** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **7.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **8.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **9.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **10.0** NCIS: New Orleans **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **12.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** NCIS: New Orleans **2.0** Fringe **3.0** Fringe **4.0** Fringe **5.0** Fringe **6.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **7.0** The 00s: Cinema's Greatest Decade **8.0** SEAL Team **9.0** S.W.A.T **10.0** NCIS: Los Angeles **11.0** Fantasy Island **12.0** The Force: North East **1.0** The Force: North East **2.0** Road Wars **3.0** Road Wars **4.0** Stop, Search, Seize **5.0** Stop, Search, Seize

### Sky Arts

**6.0am** La Wally **8.30** Tales of the Unexpected **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.30** Tales of the Unexpected **11.0** Landscape Artist of the Year National Trust Favourites **12.0** The Art of the Garden **1.0** André Rieu: La Vie Est Belle **2.40** FILM I Am Burt Reynolds (2020) **4.20** FILM I Am Alfred Hitchcock (2021) **6.0** The Agatha Christie Hour **7.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **8.0** Clint Eastwood: A Life in Film **9.45** Discovering: Michael Caine **10.45** The Decade the Music Died **12.20** Peter Gabriel: Taking the Pulse – Live in Verona **2.30** The Festival That Rocked the World **4.0** The Ronnie Wood Show **4.35** The Ronnie Wood Show **5.15** Discovering: Carpenters **5.45** Arts Uncovered



*Easy A, BBC Three*

### Sky Atlantic

**6.0am** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **7.0** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **8.0** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **8.55** The Wire **2.30** True Blood **3.30** True Blood **4.35** True Blood **5.40** True Blood **6.45** True Blood **7.55** Catherine the Great **9.0** Succession **10.10** Dreamland **10.40** Perry Mason **11.45** Patrick Melrose **12.55** Treme **2.0** Succession **3.10** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets

## Radio

### Radio 3

**7.0am** Breakfast **9.0** Sunday Morning **12.0** Private Passions. With anthropologist Mary-Ann Ochota. **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Violinist Ning Feng and pianist Thomas Hoppe play Schnittke, Prokofiev, Falla and Korngold. (R) **2.0** The Early Music Show **3.0** Choral Evensong (R) **4.0** Jazz Record Requests **5.0** The Listening Service (R) **5.30** Words and Music: Saturday Night and Sunday Morning **6.45** Between the Ears. Music reflecting the experiences of people with mental health conditions. **7.15** Sunday Feature: The Perfect Balance. Dr Anindya Raychaudhuri explores Edinburgh to seek different perspectives on balance. **7.30** Drama on 3: Ian McEwan With the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The author is accompanied by music as he reads from his works, including Enduring Love, Saturday, Atonement and The Child in Time. **9.15** Record Review Extra **11.0** The Story of the Little Book. Emma Jenkins reflects on the peculiar requirements of the opera text. (2/3) **12.0** Classical Fix **12.30** Through the Night

### Radio 4

**6.0am** News **6.05** Something Understood. How mundane objects can trigger memories. (R) **6.35** On Your Farm. Verity Sharp visits a family who are farming goats in Pembrokeshire. (5/8) **6.57** Weather **7.0** News **7.0** Sunday Papers **7.10** Sunday **7.54** Radio 4 Appeal: Cure EB **7.57** Weather **8.0** News **8.0** Sunday Papers **8.10** Sunday Worship **8.48** A Point of View (R) **8.58** Tweet of the Day (R) **9.0** Broadcasting House **10.0** The Archers: Omnibus (R) **11.15** Desert Island Discs (2/14) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Just a Minute (R) **12.30** The Food Programme. An experiment in eating like a hunter-gatherer. **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World This Weekend **1.30** Conspiracies: The Secret Knowledge. The rumours of plots that swirled around Harold Wilson. (1/6) **2.0** Gardeners' Question Time (R) **2.45** Opening Lines. John Yorke concludes his look at Anna Karenina by focusing on Tolstoy and his world. (3/3) **3.0** Love Stories: Anna Karenina. The final part of Linda Marshall Griffiths's dramatisation. (3/3) **4.0** Open Book. Works by Deborah Levy. **4.30** 21st-Century Relaxation Tape. Jennifer Walshe presents a half-hour of aural bliss. **5.0** File on 4 (R) **5.40** Profile (R) **5.54** Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.15** Pick of the Week **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Mark Steel's in Town: Aberystwyth (R) **7.45** On Portobello Prom. By Sara Sheridan. (2/5) **8.0** Feedback (R) **8.30** Last Word (R) **9.0** Money Box (R) **9.25** Radio 4 Appeal (R) **9.30** Short Cuts (R) **9.59** Weather **10.0** The Westminster Hour **11.0** Loose Ends (R) **11.30** Something Understood (R) **12.0** News **12.15** Thinking Allowed (R) **12.45** Bells on Sunday (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

### Radio 4 Extra

**6.0am** Poetry Extra **6.30** Catch-22 Omnibus (6-10) **7.40** Inheritance Tracks **7.50** Young Victoria Omnibus: Part One **9.0** Instant Sunshine **9.30** The Navy Lark **10.0** Desert Island Discs Revisited: Honoured Actors **10.45** David Attenborough's Life Stories **11.0** Poetry Extra **11.30** Catch-22 Omnibus (6-10) **12.40** Inheritance Tracks **12.50** Young Victoria Omnibus: Part One **2.0** Instant Sunshine **2.30** The Navy Lark **3.0** Desert Island Discs Revisited: Honoured Actors **3.45** David Attenborough's Life Stories **4.0** Night Watch (5/5) **4.30** The Golden Apples of the Sun (2/4) **5.0** Poetry Extra **5.30** Catch-22 Omnibus (6-10) **6.40** Inheritance Tracks **6.50** Young Victoria Omnibus: Part One **8.0** Instant Sunshine **8.30** The Navy Lark **9.0** Desert Island Discs Revisited **9.45** David Attenborough's Life Stories **10.0** Start/Stop (5/6) **10.30** Chain Reaction (6/6) **11.0** Andy Hamilton Sort of Remembers (2/4) **11.30** Brian Appleton's History of Rock'n'Roll (2/6) **11.45** Self Storage (2/6) **12.0** Poetry Extra **12.30** Catch-22 Omnibus (6-10) **1.40** Inheritance Tracks **1.50** Young Victoria Omnibus: Part One **3.0** Instant Sunshine **3.30** The Navy Lark **4.0** Desert Island Discs Revisited **4.45** David Attenborough's Life Stories **5.0** Dangerous Samples

# *Monday*


*The Stones and Brian Jones, BBC Two*

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

**8.0** **Panorama: False Diagnosis – The ADHD Scandal** (T) Private clinics offering adult assessment for ADHD.
**8.30** **Scam Interceptors** (T) (R) The hunt for cyber criminals.
**9.0** **Steeltown Murders** (T) New series. A Port Talbot CID officer reopens a murder case from 1973. Crime drama, with Philip Glenister.

**10.0** **News** (T)
**10.30** **Regional News** (T) Weather
**10.40** **Have I Got a Bit More News for You** (T) Hosted by Diane Morgan.
**11.25** **Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star** (T) (R) The nine artists create looks for Sephora's "Express all of you" beauty campaign.
**12.25** **Weather** (T) **12.30** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.45** **Bargain Hunt** (T) (R) **7.30** Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Rick Stein's Cornwall (T) (R) **8.30** Designing the Hebrides (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **3.15** Secret Britain (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters With Alan Carr (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Digging for Britain (T) (R)

**8.0** **Grand Tours of Scotland's Rivers** (T) Paul Murton explores the lower reaches of the Spey.
**8.30** **University Challenge** (T) The first of the semi-finals.
**9.0** **The Stones and Brian Jones** (T) Nick Broomfield examines the life and legacy of the founder member of the Rolling Stones.

**10.30** **Newsnight** (T) Weather
**11.15** FILM **Colette** (Wash Westmoreland, 2018) (T) A French female author's semi-autobiographical tales become a sensation. Biopic, starring Keira Knightley and Dominic West.
**1.0** **Sign Zone** Countryfile (T) (R) **1.55** Reunion Hotel (T) (R) **2.55** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

**8.0** **Coronation Street** (T) Amy tells Mia she was raped by Aaron, but her warning backfires.
**9.0** **Without Sin** (T) New series. A woman meets the man jailed for her child's murder as part of a restorative justice programme. Thriller, with Vicky McClure and Johnny Harris.

**10.0** **News** (T) Weather
**10.30** **Local News** (T) Weather
**10.45** **Unbelievable Moments Caught on Camera** (T) (R)
**11.40** **All Elite Wrestling: Dynamite** (T) (R) Fight action.
**1.15** **Shop: Ideal World** **3.0** Alison Hammond in at the Rich End: The Riviera (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Made in Britain (T) (R)

## Channel 4

**6.05** **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

**8.0** **Sarah Beeny's New Life in the Country** (T) Sarah and Graham discover a whole load of odd antiques and family heirlooms.
**9.0** **Rescue: Extreme Medics** (T) New series. An air ambulance is dispatched to help a rally driver on the island of Mull. Plus, a coastguard helicopter flies to a remote sea loch.

**10.0** **First Dates** (T)
**11.05** **Naked Attraction** (T) (R)
**12.10** **999: On the Front Line** (T) (R) **1.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **1.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **2.45** Grand Designs (T) (R) **3.40** Amazing Spaces (T) (R) **4.35** One-Pan Wonders (T) (R) **5.0** Jamie's Comfort Food (T) (R) **5.15** Moneybags (T)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM A Date With Deceit (Leena Pendharkar, 2023) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Traffic Cops (T) (R)

**8.0** **Police Interceptors** (T) Dog handler Chris finds himself on the tail of a runaway Renault Clio.
**9.0** **Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders** (T) Officers are in pursuit of thieves who have stolen more than £5,000 worth of luxury goods from a Cheshire shop.

**10.0** **Ambulance: Code Red** (T) (R)
**11.05** **999: Critical Condition** (T)
**12.05** **Police Interceptors** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Walking Britain's Lost Railways (T) (R) **3.50** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.40** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.30** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **Paul Merson: A Walk Through My Life** (T) (R) The former footballer walks in North Yorkshire, reflecting on his life and career.

**8.0** **Mindful Escapes: Breathe, Release, Restore** (T) (R) Andy Puddicombe reveals why breathing is so important to becoming still and being in the moment.
**8.30** **Life of a Mountain: A Year on Helvellyn** (T) (R) Documentary capturing a year in the life of the Lake District's most popular peak.

**10.0** **The Sky at Night** (T) (R)
**10.30** **The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway** (T) (R) The building of London's Elizabeth Line.
**11.30** **Building Britain's Biggest Nuclear Power Station** (T) (R) Hinkley Point C.
**12.30** **H2O** (T) (R) **1.25** Novels That Shaped Our World (T) (R) **2.25** The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway (T) (R)

# Other channels

### BBC Three

**7.0pm** Top Gear **8.0** The Catch Up **8.05** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **8.30** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **9.0** I Kissed a Boy **9.50** Jesy Nelson: Odd One Out **10.50** Fleabag **11.15** Fleabag **11.45** I Kissed a Boy **12.40** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **1.05** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **1.30** Fleabag **2.0** Fleabag **2.30** Ellie & Natasia **2.45** Jesy Nelson: Odd One Out **3.45** Zen Motoring

### Dave

**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.35** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More 2018 News for You **10.0** QI XL **11.0** Alan Davies: As Yet Untitled **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

### E4

**6.0am** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.05** Made in Chelsea **11.05** Gogglebox **12.10** Naked Attraction **1.15** The Big Celebrity Detox **2.20** Made in Chelsea **3.15** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.05** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.55** The Neighborhood **5.20** The Neighborhood

### Film4

**11.0am** FILM Texas Lady (1955) **12.45** FILM Ministry of Fear (1944) **2.30** FILM Three Hours to Kill (1954) **4.05** FILM The Quiet Man (1952) **6.45** FILM The Devil Wears Prada (2006) **9.0** FILM Jojo Rabbit (2019) **11.10** FILM Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (2016) **1.45** FILM Catch Me Daddy (2014)

### ITV2

**6.0am** World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** The OC **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** I'm a Celebrity South Africa Final **1.30** In for a Penny **2.0** Family Fortunes **3.05** Chuck **4.0** One Tree Hill **5.0** I'm a Celebrity South Africa Final **6.30** In for a Penny **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Family Guy **9.30** Family Guy **10.0** Family Guy **10.30** Family Guy **11.05** Family Guy **11.35** American Dad! **12.0** American Dad! **12.30** Bob's Burgers **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Superstore **1.55** Superstore **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max

**6.0am** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** NCIS: Los Angeles **9.0** Bel-Air **10.0** Rob & Romesh vs Team GB: Part 1 **11.0** Rob & Romesh vs Team GB: Part 2 **12.0** The Force: North East **1.0** Road Wars **2.0** The Flash **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol

### Sky Arts

**6.0am** Janine and the 12 Stradivari **7.10** A John Williams Celebration: LA Opening Gala 2014 **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Steve McQueen **12.0** David Hockney at the Royal Academy of Arts **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Reinventing the Orchestra With Charles Hazlewood **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Maureen O'Hara **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Pavarotti: The Duets – The Best of Pavarotti and Friends **8.35** André Rieu: Live at the Royal Albert Hall **10.35** HMS Pinafore With ENO **12.35** Punchdrunk: Behind the Mask **1.35** Jack B Yeats: The Man Who Painted Ireland **2.45** Why Do We Dance? **4.0** The South Bank Show **5.0** Auction **5.30** Auction


*Jojo Rabbit, Film4*

### Sky Atlantic

**6.0am** Urban Secrets **7.55** The Wire **10.05** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** **Succession** **10.10** Patrick Melrose **11.20** Billions **12.25** Billions **1.30** Catherine the Great **2.35** Game of Thrones **3.40** In Treatment **4.10** Urban Secrets

# Radio

### Radio 3

**6.30am** Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (1/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Live from Wigmore Hall, violinist Alina Ibragimova and pianist Cédric Tiberghien play Schumann's Violin Sonata No 1 in A minor, Op 105, and Violin Sonata No 2 in D minor, Op 121. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. A week of programmes featuring the Ulster Orchestra at Belfast's Ulster Hall, starting with Beethoven's Fourth Symphony. **4.30** New Generation Artists **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. From the 2022 Salzburg Festival, Maxime Pascal conducts the SWR Symphony Orchestra, Stuttgart, in Honegger's Joan of Arc at the Stake, with Irène Jacob (Jeanne d'Arc), Jérôme Kircher (Frère Dominique), Elena Tsallagova (La Vierge), Mélissa Petit (Marguerite), Salzburg Festival and Theatre Children's Choir, and Bavarian Radio Chorus. **9.0** Ultimate Calm (6/12) **10.0** Music Matters (R) **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. Edmund de Waal explores the influence of Hans Coper on his work. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

### Radio 4

**6.0am** Today **9.0** Start the Week. The ethics of banking. **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night – A Year With the Police. By Matt Lloyd-Rose. (1/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Blood on the Dance Floor. Jordan Dunbar looks back at the night of the killing. (4/6) **11.30** Lady Killers With Lucy Worsley. A nurse with a penchant for poisoning. (9/10) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. The difficulties of getting to the truth of a news story. (6/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** This Cultural Life (R) **3.0** Round Britain Quiz (6/12) **3.30** The Food Programme (R) **4.0** Is Psychiatry Working: Anxiety **4.30** Beyond Belief **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** Just a Minute (7/8) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** Buying a British Dad. Investigative documentary. **8.30** Crossing Continents (R) **9.0** Supersenses (R) **9.30** Start the Week (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece. By Tom Hanks. (1/10) **11.0** Word of Mouth (R) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

### Radio 4 Extra

**6.0am** Peeler (5/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (2/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (1/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (6/10) **7.30** Alexei Sayle's Imaginary Sandwich Bar (1/4) **8.0** Round the Horne (11/16) **8.30** Dry Slopes (3/4) **9.0** The Write Stuff (2/6) **9.30** Double Income, No Kids Yet (4/6) **10.0** Dangerous Samples **11.0** Peeler (5/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (2/6) **12.0** Hello World (1/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (6/10) **12.30** Alexei Sayle's Imaginary Sandwich Bar (1/4) **1.0** Round the Horne (11/16) **1.30** Dry Slopes (3/4) **2.0** The Write Stuff (2/6) **2.30** Double Income, No Kids Yet (4/6) **3.0** Dangerous Samples **4.0** Peeler (5/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (2/6) **5.0** Hello World (1/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (6/10) **5.30** Alexei Sayle's Imaginary Sandwich Bar (1/4) **6.0** Round the Horne (11/16) **6.30** Dry Slopes (3/4) **7.0** The Write Stuff (2/6) **7.30** Double Income, No Kids Yet (4/6) **8.0** Radiolab (3/8) **8.55** Inheritance Tracks **9.0** Mastertapes (3/10) **9.30** A Gathering Light (1/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (6/15) **10.0** Just a Minute (6/8) **10.30** And Now in Colour (2/6) **11.0** The News Quiz (3/7) **11.30** The Skivers (1/5) **12.0** Dangerous Samples **1.0** Peeler (5/6) **1.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (2/6) **2.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (1/5) **2.15** Young Victoria (6/10) **2.30** Alexei Sayle's Imaginary Sandwich Bar (1/4) **3.0** Round the Horne (11/16) **3.30** Dry Slopes (3/4) **4.0** The Write Stuff (2/6) **4.30** Double Income, No Kids Yet (4/6) **5.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (1/3)

# Tuesday



*Waterloo Road, BBC One*

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

**8.0** **Waterloo Road** (T) New series. Kim is rocked by a blast from the past, and a new pupil causes problems.
**9.0** **MasterChef** (T) The first challenge of knockout week sees the cooks making dishes they would put in their cookbook before being thrown in at the deep end in a busy restaurant.

**10.0** **News** (T)
**10.30** **Regional News** (T) Weather
**10.40** **Rain Dogs** (T) Costello falls back into bad habits.
**11.10** **The Truth About Improving Your Mental Health** (T) (R) Prof Tanya Byron and former footballer Alex Scott uncover science on how to improve mental health and wellbeing.
**12.10** **Weather** (T) **12.15** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.30** **Bargain Hunt** (T) (R) **7.15** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Coast to Coast Food Festival (T) (R) **8.30** Coastal Defenders (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** The Super League Show (T) (R) **1.45** Impossible (T) (R) **2.30** Eggheads (T) (R) **3.0** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **4.0** Beechgrove Repotted (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters With Alan Carr (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Digging for Britain (T) (R)

**8.0** **Inside the Factory** (T) (R) Gregg Wallace visits a Denby factory that has been making pottery since 1809.
**9.0** **Forensics: The Real CSI** (T) New series. The forensics team must identify and arrest a rapist through information provided by the victim and digital evidence recovered from the crime scene.

**10.0** **Colin from Accounts** (T) Ashley takes Gordon to her mother's home for dinner.
**10.30** **Newsnight** (T) Weather
**11.15** FILM **Moonlight** (Barry Jenkins, 2016) (T) Drama.
**1.0** **Sign Zone** Murder in the Pacific (T) (R) **1.45** MasterChef (T) (R) **2.45** A Special School (T) (R) **3.15** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

**8.0** **Love Your Garden** (T) Alan Titchmarsh helps overhaul firefighter Rebecca's garden in Northamptonshire.
**9.0** **Without Sin** (T) Charles tries to convince Stella that he was set up by a notorious crime family, but she struggles to believe what he tells her as she learns more about his dark past.

**10.0** **News** (T) Weather
**10.30** **Local News** (T) Weather
**10.45** **Jonathan Ross' Must-Watch Films** (T) Recommendations for movies available on ITVX.
**11.15** **British Touring Car Championship Highlights** (T)
**12.30** **Shop: Ideal World 3.0** Monster Carp (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Bling (T) (R)

## Channel 4

**6.05** **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

**8.0** **The Greatest Auction** (T) Collectors bid for a pinball machine signed by Elton John, and a prototype mid-century chair.
**9.0** **Grand Designs: The Streets** (T) New series. Kevin McCloud follows two neigbouring families from Yorkshire as they venture into the world of self-build.

**10.0** **Rebekah Vardy: Jehovah's Witnesses and Me** (T)
**11.05** **Gogglebox** (T) (R)
**1.05** **Taskmaster** (T) (R) **2.0** The Lateish Show With Mo Gilligan (T) (R) **2.55** The Curse (T) (R) (T) (R) **3.50** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **4.45** Jamie's One-Pan Wonders (T) (R) **5.10** Moneybags (T) (R)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake! 9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM The Disappearance of Cari Farver (Danishka Esterhazy, 2022) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Michael Portillo's Pyrenees Adventure (T) (R)

**8.0** **The Yorkshire Vet** (T) Peter has his hands full when two wild owls are brought into the practice.
**9.0** **The Big Steam Adventure** (T) As John, Peter and Paul embark on the last leg of their journey, they travel from Whitby via Beamish and the River Tyne, before reaching the Scottish border.

**10.0** **The Lie: Murder in Suburbia** (T) (R) A 2004 killing.
**11.55** **Born to Kill?** (T) (R)
**1.0** **Teleshopping** (T) **3.0** Good Girls' Guide to Kinky Sex (T) (R) **3.45** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.30** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **4.55** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.20** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **Railways: The Making of a Nation** (T) (R) Liz McIvor examines the impact of railways on Britain. **7.30** Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam (T) (R) Early steam experiments for road use.

**8.0** **As Time Goes By** (T) (R) Jean is invited to stay at her sister-in-law's home.
**8.30** **Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads?** (T) (R) Terry finds it difficult to accept that times have changed.
**9.0** **Dam Busters Declassified** (T) (R) Actor Martin Shaw takes to the skies to retrace the 1943 raid by 617 Squadron.

**10.0** **Storyville: In the Name of the Father** (T) Documentary tracing a scandal in an Orthodox Hasidic community after the death of its leader.
**11.30** **Britain and the Sea** (T) (R)
**12.30** **Railways: The Making of a Nation** (T) (R) **1.0** Age of Steam (T) (R) **1.30** Dam Busters Declassified (T) (R) **2.30** Britain and the Sea (T)

# Other channels

### BBC Three

**7.0pm** Top Gear **8.05** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **8.35** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **9.0** The Apprentice Australia **10.10** The Young Offenders **10.40** The Young Offenders **11.10** I Kissed a Boy **12.0** I Kissed a Boy **12.50** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **1.50** The Young Offenders **2.20** The Young Offenders **2.50** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **3.20** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **3.45** Zen Motoring

### Dave

**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** QI XL **11.0** Meet the Richardsons **11.40** Would I Lie to You? The Unseen Bits **12.20** QI XL **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

### E4

**6.0am** Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** The Inbetweeners **10.35** The Inbetweeners **11.05** Naked Attraction **12.10** Naked Attraction **1.15** The Big Celebrity Detox **2.20** Gogglebox **3.15** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.05** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.55** The Neighborhood **5.20** The Neighborhood

### Film4

**11.0am** FILM Legend of the Lost (1957) **1.15** FILM Born Free (1966) **3.05** FILM The Wrong Box (1966) **5.15** FILM Man of the West (1958) **7.15** FILM Daddy's Home (2015) **9.0** FILM Jungleland (2019) **10.50** FILM Watchmen (2009) **2.05** FILM Mid90s (2018)

### ITV2

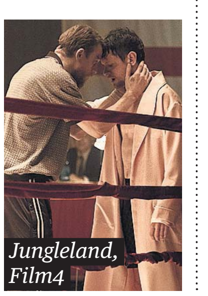
**6.0am** World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** The OC **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Hell's Kitchen **10.0** Plebs **10.30** Plebs **11.05** Family Guy **11.30** Family Guy **12.0** American Dad! **12.30** American Dad! **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Bob's Burgers **1.55** Superstore **2.25** Superstore **2.45** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max

**6.0am** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** The Flash **9.0** Fantasy Island **10.0** Flintoff: Lord of the Fries **11.0** S.W.A.T **12.0** The Force: North East **1.0** Road Wars **2.0** Brit Cops: Frontline Crime UK **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol **5.30** Highway Patrol

### Sky Arts

**6.0am** Beethoven: The Complete Symphonies **6.45** Australian Ballet: The Sleeping Beauty **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Maureen O'Hara **12.0** The Sixties **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** The Art of Architecture **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Edward G Robinson **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** The Art of the Garden **8.0** The Artist's Garden: American Impressionism **9.0** The Grapes of Wrath: The Ghost of Modern America **10.0** Margaret Atwood: A Word After a Word After a Word Is Power **12.0** FILM Dean Martin: King of Cool (2021) **2.15** Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga: Cheek to Cheek Live! **3.30** Music Icons: Soul Crooners **4.0** Skinner & Mina's Literary Road Trip: Pope & Swift **5.0** Auction **5.30** Auction



*Jungleland, Film4*

### Sky Atlantic

**6.0am** Urban Secrets **7.55** The Wire **10.05** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Gangs of London **10.05** Perry Mason **11.10** Dreamland **11.40** Treme **12.50** The Night Of **2.0** The L Word: Generation Q **3.0** Game of Thrones **4.05** Urban Secrets

# Radio

### Radio 3

**6.30am** Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (2/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. L'Apothéose in a programme of baroque music fit for the Spanish court, including Tommaso Giordani and Stamitz. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Ulster Orchestra play Beethoven's Violin Concerto with Francesca Dego. Plus, Stravinsky's Octet for Winds from the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. Edward Gardner conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra and sopranos Emma Bell and Elsa Dreisig in Brett Dean's In spe contra spem and Mahler's Symphony No 5. **10.0** Free Thinking. A look at Zimbabwean writing. **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. The connection between ceramics and stories. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

### Radio 4

**6.0am** Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** The Long View **9.30** Metamorphosis: How Insects Transformed Our World (R) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night (2/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Supersenses. Technology that could help create all-sensing superhumans. (5/5) **11.30** Sound Towns. The story of Warp Records. (2/4) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Call You and Yours **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. How journalists deal with sources and spin. (7/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** Downstream. Drama, by Nick Warburton. **3.0** The Kitchen Cabinet (R) **3.30** Costing the Earth. The effect of the climate crisis on bacteria and fungi. **4.0** The Hidden Masters of the Universe **4.30** Great Lives. Jon Ronson on singer Terry Hall. (7/9) **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **6.0** News **6.30** Wosson Cornwall (4/4) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** Who Gets In? Affirmative Action on Trial. A court case challenging the admissions process at Harvard. (3/3) **8.40** In Touch **9.0** All in the Mind (4/10) **9.30** The Long View (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece (2/10) **11.0** The Confessional (R) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day

### Radio 4 Extra

**6.0am** Peeler (6/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (3/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (2/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (7/10) **7.30** North By Northamptonshire (4/6) **8.0** The Goon Show (18/26) **8.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (2/6) **9.0** The Motion Show (6/6) **9.30** Big Town All Stars (3/4) **10.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (1/3) **11.0** Peeler (6/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (3/6) **12.0** Hello World (2/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (7/10) **12.30** North By Northamptonshire (4/6) **1.0** The Goon Show (18/26) **1.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (2/6) **2.0** The Motion Show (6/6) **2.30** Big Town All Stars (3/4) **3.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (1/3) **4.0** Peeler (6/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay (3/6) **5.0** Hello World (2/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (7/10) **5.30** North By Northamptonshire (4/6) **6.0** The Goon Show (18/26) **6.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (2/6) **7.0** The Motion Show (6/6) **7.30** Big Town All Stars (3/4) **8.0** TED Radio Hour (35/48) **8.50** Inheritance Tracks **9.0** Mastertapes (4/10) **9.30** A Gathering Light (2/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (7/15) **10.0** Wosson Cornwall (3/4) **10.30** The Jason Byrne Show (5/6) **11.0** The (Almost) Accidental Adventures of Bell and Todd (6/6) **11.15** Paperback Hell (3/6) **11.30** ElvenQuest (5/6) **12.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (1/3) **1.0** Peeler (6/6) **1.30** Dr Finlay (3/6) **2.0** Hello World (2/5) **2.15** Young Victoria (7/10) **2.30** North By Northamptonshire (4/6) **3.0** The Goon Show (18/26) **3.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (2/6) **4.0** The Motion Show (6/6) **4.30** Big Town All Stars (3/4) **5.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3)


*Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction, BBC One*

# Wednesday

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

**8.0** **The Repair Shop** (T) (R) The team restore a crumbling cast-iron gate, a century-old watch, a rocking chair and a vintage penny arcade game.

**9.0** **Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction** (T) Bassist and co-founder of Busted Matt Willis opens up about his experiences battling drug and alcohol addiction.

**10.0** **News** (T)
**10.30** **Regional News** (T) Weather
**10.40** **I Kissed a Boy** (T) (R) Dannii Minogue presents a dating show for gay men, in which 10 contestants are matched up by kissing before they have spoken to each other.
**11.25** **I Kissed a Boy** (T) (R)
**12.20** **Weather for the Week Ahead** (T) **12.25** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.15** **Homes Under the Hammer** (T) (R) **7.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: 24/7 Pet Hospital (T) (R) **8.30** Take a Hike (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **11.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **3.15** Secret Britain (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters With Alan Carr (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Digging for Britain (T) (R)

**8.0** **Designing the Hebrides** (T) Banjo Beale is asked to design a rustic gin-tasting bar.

**8.30** **Wales' Home of the Year** (T) The final. Last in the series.

**9.0** **11 Minutes: America's Deadliest Mass Shooting** (T) New series. Documentary about the attack on the 2017 Route 91 Harvest music festival in Las Vegas.

**10.30** **Newsnight** (T) Weather
**11.15** **Unspun World With John Simpson** (T) News review.
**11.45** **Forensics: The Real CSI** (T) (R) The forensics team must identify and arrest a rapist.
**12.45** **Sign Zone** Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars (T) (R) **1.45** Saving Lives in Leeds (T) (R) **2.45** MasterChef (T) (R) **3.45** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

**8.0** **Coronation Street** (T) Abi and Tyrone sack Aaron, while Eric announces he is suing Amy for libel.

**9.0** **Without Sin** (T) Stella uncovers a darker side to Maisy, which leads to some home truths about her marriage and her parenting. Her secrets bring Stella closer to the truth.

**10.0** **News** (T) Weather
**10.30** **Local News** (T) Weather
**10.45** **Peston** (T) Political chat.
**11.40** **Heathrow: Britain's Busiest Airport** (T) (R)
**12.0** **EFL Highlights** (T) **12.50** Shop: Ideal World **3.0** Food Prices: How High Will They Go? (T) (R) **3.25** Emmerdale: 50 Unforgettable Years (T) **4.15** Unwind With ITV (T)

## Channel 4

**6.05** **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **8.55** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

**8.0** **Location, Location, Location** (T) In Surrey, Kirstie and Phil are searching for a home to bring couple Eleanor and Laurence closer to family.

**9.0** **Kids** (T) Seventeen-year-old Bayley prepares to leave the care home, and Byron shocks everyone by leaving the security of life with his long-term foster carers.

**10.0** **Naked Attraction** (T)
**11.05** **First Dates** (T) (R)
**12.05** **24 Hours in A&E** (T) (R) **1.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **1.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **2.50** Grand Designs (T) (R) **3.45** Unreported World (T) (R) **4.10** The Great British Dig (T) (R) **5.05** Jamie's Comfort Food (T) **5.15** Moneybags (T)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Killer in the Attic (David DeCoteau, 2021) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Michael Portillo's Pyrenees Adventure (T) (R)

**8.0** **Natural History Museum: World of Wonder** (T) The Urban Nature Project team start the ambitious transformation of the Natural History Museum garden, and Kieran repairs a fossil.

**9.0** **999: Critical Condition** (T) A man is rushed in with some of the worst facial injuries the team have ever seen.

**10.0** **Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts** (T) (R)
**11.05** **A&E After Dark** (T) (R)
**12.05** **Criminals Caught on Camera** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Good Girls' Guide to Kinky Sex (T) (R) **3.45** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.35** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **4.55** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.20** Milkshake! (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **Great Railway Journeys** (T) (R) Victoria Wood tours northern England and Scotland, starting in Crewe.

**7.55** **Victoria Wood: A Bafta Tribute** (T) (R) A celebration of the comedian, actor and writer, with Julie Walters, Lenny Henry, Richard E Grant and Jim Broadbent.

**9.0** **Victoria Wood: The Secret List** (T) (R) Part one of two. Favourite sketches chosen by Wood in a notebook discovered after her death.

**10.0** **Duncan Preston Remembers: Pat and Margaret** (T) (R)
**10.10** **Pat and Margaret** (T) (R) Comedy-drama, with Victoria Wood and Julie Walters.
**11.35** **Victoria Wood: The Secret List** (T) (R) Part two of two.
**12.35** **Victoria Wood: A Personal View** (T) (R) **1.0** Mindful Escapes (T) (R) **1.30** Great Railway Journeys (T) (R)

# Other channels

### BBC Three
**7.0pm** Top Gear **8.0** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **9.0** Rookie Nurses **10.0** FILM Easy A (2010) **11.30** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **12.30** Rookie Nurses **1.30** Therapy: Tough Talking **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Rookie Nurses

### Dave
**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** QI XL **11.0** QI XL **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

### E4
**6.0am** Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **9.30** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** Emergency on Sunny Beach **11.05** Gogglebox **12.10** Naked Attraction **1.15** The Big Celebrity Detox **2.20** Emergency on Sunny Beach **3.15** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.05** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.55** The Neighborhood **5.20** The Neighborhood

### Film4
**11.0am** FILM The Yellow Balloon (1953) **12.40** FILM Footsteps in the Fog (1955) **2.30** FILM The Long Arm (1956) **4.30** FILM First Men in the Moon (1964) **6.35** FILM Star Trek (2009) **9.0** FILM Flight (2012) **11.45** FILM Hell Or High Water (2016) **1.50** FILM The Escapist (2008)

### ITV2
**6.0am** World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Hell's Kitchen **10.0** Shopping With Keith Lemon **10.30** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.30** Bob's Burgers **1.30** Superstore **2.25** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max
**6.0am** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** S.W.A.T **9.0** FILM The Last Witch Hunter (2015) **11.0** Strike Back: Shadow Warfare **12.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **1.0** Brassic **2.0** Stop, Search, Seize **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol

### Sky Arts
**6.0am** Darbar: Music of India **7.0** André Rieu: Live at the Royal Albert Hall **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Edward G Robinson **12.0** Cezanne: Portraits of a Life **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Manet from the Royal Academy of Arts, London **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Jack Lemmon **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: Frances McDormand **8.0** Portrait Artist of the Year 2018 **9.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **10.0** FILM Steve McQueen: The Lost Movie (2021) **11.50** FILM I Am Bruce Lee (2011) **1.45** Statues Redressed **3.40** Lenny Henry's Got the Blues **4.40** Auction: George Michael Special **5.05** Auction **5.30** Auction


*Hell or High Water, Film4*

### Sky Atlantic
**6.0am** Urban Secrets **7.55** The Wire **10.05** True Blood **11.10** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Perry Mason **10.05** Succession **11.15** Dreamland **11.45** The Night Of **12.55** Sharp Objects **2.0** The L Word: Generation Q **3.0** Game of Thrones **4.05** Urban Secrets

# Radio

### Radio 3
**6.30am** Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (3/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Soprano Ruby Hughes and theorbo player Sergio Bucheli play works including Strozzi and Dowland, plus songs from the Peruvian Codex Zuola. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Ulster Orchestra play Sibelius's Fifth Symphony. Plus, Ravel's La Valse by the BBC SO. **4.0** Choral Evensong **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. James Feddeck conducts the BBC NOW and pianist Daniel Ciobanu in Clyne's Masquerade, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No 1 in B flat minor, Op 23, and Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances, Op 45. **10.0** Free Thinking. Camp sensibilities and links to the gothic. **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. Edmund De Waal on the Schindler House in California. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

### Radio 4
**6.0am** Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** Life Changing (7/7) **9.30** Please Protect Abraham. The police launch an investigation. (R) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night - A Year With the Police (3/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Buying a British Dad (R) **11.30** A Very British Cult. A focus on the loved ones of those who are in Lighthouse. (7/8) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. Jeremy Bowen considers how much detail is enough when reporting. (8/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** I Don't Believe You. Drama, by Robert Forrest. (R) **3.0** Money Box Live **3.30** All in the Mind (R) **4.0** Thinking Allowed (7/10) **4.30** The Media Show **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **6.0** News **6.30** Lemn Sissay's Social Enterprise. What charity means when it comes to time. (4/4) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** Bringing Up Britain. A mother is unsure if she should encourage her teenage boys to go to university. (4/4) **8.45** Metamorphosis: How Insects Transformed Our World (R) **9.0** Costing the Earth (R) **9.30** The Media Show (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime (3/10) **11.0** Jamie MacDonald: Life on the Blink (4/6) **11.15** The Skewer (2/7) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

### Radio 4 Extra
**6.0am** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (4/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (3/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **7.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **8.0** Hancock's Half Hour **8.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **9.0** Nature Table (1/6) **9.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **10.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3) **11.0** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (4/6) **12.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (3/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **12.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **1.0** Hancock's Half Hour **1.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **2.0** Nature Table (1/6) **2.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **3.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3) **4.0** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay (4/6) **5.0** Hello World (3/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **5.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **6.0** Hancock's Half Hour **6.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **7.0** Nature Table (1/6) **7.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **8.0** Victoria Wood: From Soup to Nuts (1/2) **8.30** Ways of Thinking **9.0** Short Cuts (3/6) **9.30** A Gathering Light (3/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (8/15) **10.0** Lemn Sissay's Social Enterprise (2/4) **10.30** Pick-Ups (4/6) **11.0** The Sofa of Time (1/6) **11.30** The Mel and Sue Thing (1/6) **12.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (2/3) **1.0** Shadows in Bronze (1/6) **1.30** Dr Finlay (4/6) **2.0** Hello World (3/5) **2.15** Young Victoria (8/10) **2.30** Women Talking About Cars (3/4) **3.0** Hancock's Half Hour **3.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (1/6) **4.0** Nature Table (1/6) **4.30** Hobby Bobbies (4/4) **5.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3)

# Thursday



*MasterChef, BBC One*

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

**8.0** **MasterChef** (T) The hopefuls compete to experience a professional kitchen, with John Torode and guest judge Monica Galetti choosing who will work in the Royal Opera House's Piazza restaurant.

**9.0** **Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars** (T) The semi-finalists have their social media skills tested.

**10.0** **News** (T)
**10.30** **Regional News** (T) Weather
**10.40** **Question Time** (T) Fiona Bruce chairs the topical debate in Fort William.
**11.40** **Newscast** (T) A weekly round-up from Westminster, hosted by Adam Fleming and Chris Mason.
**12.10** **Weather for the Week Ahead** (T) **12.15** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.30** **Money for Nothing** (T) (R) **7.15** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **8.0** Between the Covers (T) (R) **8.30** Caught Red Handed (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **3.15** Secret Britain (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** House of Games (T) **6.30** Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Watergate to Trump: Amol Rajan Interviews (T) **7.45** Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs (T)

**8.0** **DNA Family Secrets** (T) (R) A woman who grew up in a Nazi concentration camp as a Jewish orphan longs to know more about her family.

**9.0** **Guilt** (T) Max has a plan to seize Sturrock's money but will not tell Jake what it is, leaving his brother close to entering a secret alliance with Sheila. Last in the series.

**10.0** **Inside No 9** (T) Darkly comic tale set on a bus.
**10.30** **Newsnight** (T) Weather
**11.15** **The Stones and Brian Jones** (T) Music documentary.
**12.50** **Sign Zone** Inside the Factory (T) (R) **1.50** Dr Xand's Con Or Cure (T) (R) **2.35** Iolo's Borderlands (T) (R) **3.05** MasterChef (T) (R) **3.35** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Men (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

**8.30** **Tonight: All-Inclusive Holidays - Unpacked** (T) With a sharp rise in the cost of holidays, Ginny Buckley reports on whether all-inclusive breaks could be the way to go.

**9.0** **Without Sin** (T) Stella finally learns the devastating truth about what happened to her daughter.

**10.0** **News** (T) Weather
**10.30** **Local News** (T) Weather
**10.45** **The Late Debate** (T)
**11.10** **DNA Journey** (T) (R) Amanda Holden and Alan Carr delve into their family histories.
**12.15** **All Elite Wrestling: Rampage** (T) **1.10** Shop: Ideal World **3.0** Love Your Garden (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Family Fortunes (T) (R)

## Channel 4

**6.05** **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

**8.0** **24 Hours in A&E** (T) A look back at some of the most memorable staff and patient stories filmed since 2011 at King's College Hospital and St George's in south London.

**9.0** **Taskmaster** (T) The comics inventively repurpose umbrellas and Frankie Boyle goes to town on a gigantic cat scratching post.

**10.0** **Open House: The Great Sex Experiment** (T) New series.
**11.10** **Naked Attraction** (T) (R)
**12.10** **Kitchen Nightmares USA** (T) (R) **1.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **1.25** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Roman J Israel, Esq (2018) (T) **4.15** The Great British Dig (T) (R) **5.05** House of Craft (T) (R) **5.15** Moneybags (T) (R)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Ruby Herring Mysteries: Her Last Breath (Fred Gerber, 2019) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Michael Portillo's Pyrenees Adventure (T) (R)

**8.0** **Jane McDonald's Magical Morocco** (T) The singer unearths the secrets hidden in the markets of Marrakech, and while shopping she learns the art of haggling.

**9.0** **Alexander Armstrong in Sri Lanka** (T) New series. The presenter explores the south Asian country, beginning in the fortress town of Galle.

**10.0** **Killer at the Crime Scene** (T)
**11.05** **Cause of Death** (T) (R)
**12.05** **Police Interceptors** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Good Girls' Guide to Kinky Sex (T) (R) **3.50** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.35** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **4.55** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.20** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **The Sky at Night** (T) (R) The threat of an asteroid impact on Earth. **7.30** Railways: The Making of a Nation (T) (R) How the railways stimulated great changes to the British economy.

**8.0** **A House Through Time** (T) (R) David Olusoga traces the history of an 18th-century Bristol sea captain's house.

**9.0** **FILM Tea With Mussolini** (Franco Zeffirelli, 1999) (T) English and American women living in Florence in the 1930s adopt a boy. Comedy-drama, starring Maggie Smith, Judi Dench and Cher.

**10.50** **FILM Summer Holiday** (Peter Yates, 1963) (T) Four mechanics set off on a trip across Europe. Musical, starring Cliff Richard.
**12.35** **Mark Kermode's Secrets of Cinema: Pop Music Movies** (T) (R) **1.35** Paul Merson: A Walk Through My Life (T) (R) **2.35** A House Through Time (T) (R)

# Other channels

### BBC Three

**7.0pm** Top Gear **8.0** MOTDx **8.30** MOTD Top 10: Penalty Takers **9.0** Joey Essex: Grief and Me **10.0** Black Ops **10.30** Man Like Mobeen **10.55** Man Like Mobeen **11.20** Squad Goals: Britain's Youngest Football Boss **12.20** MOTDx **12.50** MOTD Top 10: Penalty Takers **1.20** Man Like Mobeen **2.10** Squad Goals: Britain's Youngest Football Boss **2.40** Joey Essex: Grief and Me **3.40** Zen Motoring

### Dave

**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.35** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** Meet the Richardsons **10.40** Mock the Week **11.20** Mock the Week **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

### E4

**6.0am** Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** Gogglebox **11.05** First Dates **12.10** The Big Celebrity Detox **1.15** Rick and Morty **1.50** Royal Crackers **2.15** Gogglebox **3.10** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.50** The Neighborhood **5.15** The Neighborhood

### Film4

**11.0am** FILM Three Hours to Kill (1954) **12.35** FILM Comanche Station (1960) **2.10** FILM High Noon (1952) **3.55** FILM Cutthroat Island (1995) **6.15** FILM Bridge of Spies (2015) **9.0** FILM The Book of Eli (2010) **11.15** FILM Death Proof (2007) **1.30** FILM **Barking Dogs Never Bite** (2000)

### ITV2

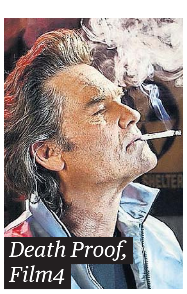
**6.0am** World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Gordon, Gino and Fred: European Road Trip **10.0** Family Guy **10.30** Family Guy **11.0** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.0** American Dad! **12.30** Bob's Burgers **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Superstore **1.55** Superstore **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max

**6.0am** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **9.0** **Last King of the Cross** **10.0** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **10.45** Fantasy Island **11.45** Resident Alien **12.40** NCIS: Los Angeles **1.35** Road Wars **2.05** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol **5.30** Highway Patrol

### Sky Arts

**6.0am** André Rieu: Welcome to My World **7.0** HMS Pinafore With ENO **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Jack Lemmon **12.0** The Artist's Garden: American Impressionism **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Laurie Lee: The Lost Interview **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Claudette Colbert **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: David Niven **8.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **9.0** The Directors **10.0** Discovering Film: Horror Special **11.30** Elvis Costello and the Imposters Live in Memphis **1.50** The Michelangelo Code: Secrets of the Sistine Chapel **4.05** Backstage: Ralph Fiennes in Straight Line Crazy **5.05** Auction **5.35** Auction



*Death Proof, Film4*

### Sky Atlantic

**6.0am** Urban Secrets **7.0** The Wire **9.25** True Blood **11.35** Game of Thrones **12.40** Ray Donovan **2.50** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Billions **11.20** Gangs of London **12.25** The L Word: Generation Q **1.30** In Treatment **2.0** Game of Thrones **3.05** Der Pass **4.05** Urban Secrets

# Radio

### Radio 3

**6.30am** Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (4/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Viol player Liam Byrne and lutenist Jonas Nordberg in Kapsberger, Marais and Ortiz. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Ulster Orchestra play Sibelius's Symphony No 6. Plus, music by Bach, Bacewicz and Ravel. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. John Storgårds conducts the BBC Philharmonic, bass-baritone Kostas Smoriginas, violinist Jennifer Pike and the Estonian National Male Choir in Pärt's De Profundis, Sibelius's Violin Concerto and Shostakovich's Symphony No 13 "Babi Yar". **10.0** Free Thinking. Matthew Sweet is joined by Simon Heffer and Tim Burrows for a discussion on Essex. **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. The story of the Fonthill vase. (R) **11.0** The Night Tracks Mix **11.30** Unclassified **12.30** Through the Night

### Radio 4

**6.0am** Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** In Our Time **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night - A Year With the Police (4/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Crossing Continents (7/7) **11.30** The Great Lives (R) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **12.30** Sliced Bread (2/10) **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. How the same story can look very different depending on how it's written. (9/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** Yellow Lips. Drama, by Katie Redford. (R) **3.0** Ramblings. Clare Balding joins adopted nine-year-old Freddie and his two mothers on the Thames Path. (1/7) **3.27** Radio 4 Appeal: Cure EB (R) **3.30** Open Book (R) **4.0** Princess. Charlene White and Ravynn Stringfield look at Black Panther's Princess Shuri. (7/10) **4.30** Inside Science **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** It's a Fair Cop (R) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** A Celebration for Ascension Day. A service live from St Martin-in-the-Fields in London. **9.0** Inside Science (R) **9.30** In Our Time **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece (4/10) **11.0** Rylan: How to Be a Man. A talk with Strictly star and wildlife cameraman Hamza Yassin. (1/10) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

### Radio 4 Extra

**6.0am** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (5/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **7.30** All Those Women (4/4) **8.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **8.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **9.0** Booked (5/6) **9.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **10.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3) **11.0** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay (5/6) **12.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **12.30** All Those Women (4/4) **1.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **1.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **2.0** Booked (5/6) **2.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **3.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3) **4.0** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay (5/6) **5.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **5.30** All Those Women (4/4) **6.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **6.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **7.0** Booked (5/6) **7.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **8.0** Writing: The Midlands (2/3) **9.0** Great Lives (5/9) **9.30** A Gathering Light (4/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (9/15) **10.0** It's a Fair Cop (2/4) **10.30** Tom Wrigglesworth's Hang-Ups (1/4) **11.0** Ida Barr: Artificial Hip Hop (1/4) **11.15** Little Lifetimes (4/4) **11.30** Rigor Mortis (2/6) **12.0** Parson Harding's Daughter (3/3) **1.0** Shadows in Bronze (2/6) **1.30** Dr Finlay (5/6) **2.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (4/5) **2.15** Young Victoria (9/10) **2.30** All Those Women (4/4) **3.0** The Burkiss Way (12/15) **3.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill **4.0** Booked (5/6) **4.30** Clare in the Community (2/6) **5.0** The One Before the Last



*The Big Interiors Battle, Channel 4*

## BBC One

**6.0** **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Hope Street (T) (R) **2.30** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) **3.45** The Bidding Room (T) (R) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** Question of Sport (T)

**8.0** **Would I Lie to You?** (T) (R) With guest Shirley Ballas.
**8.30** **MasterChef** (T) The 10 cooks have to serve up a dish they can eat with their hands.
**9.0** **Have I Got News for You** (T) Chris McCausland and Kirsty Wark join host Mel Giedroyc.
**9.30** **Black Ops** (T) Dom and Kay struggle to meet the gang's payment deadline.

**10.0** **News** (T)
**10.30** **Regional News** (T) Weather
**10.40** **The Chris & Rosie Ramsey Show** (T) Chatshow, with Michael and Jack Whitehall.
**11.25** **Bump** (T) New series. Double bill of the Australian drama.
**12.30** FILM **Weird Science** (John Hughes, 1985) (T) Sci-fi comedy. **2.0** Weather (T) **2.05** News (T)

## BBC Two

**6.15** **Homes Under the Hammer** (T) (R) **7.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Gardeners' World (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics UK (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Eat Well for Less? (T) (R) **3.15** Secret Britain (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters With Alan Carr (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Clive Myrie's Italian Road Trip (T) **7.0** Villages By the Sea (T) (R) **7.30** Beechgrove Garden (T)

**8.0** **Gardeners' World** (T) Monty Don plants tropical gingers and tomatoes.
**9.0** **Hidden Treasures of the National Trust** (T) Inside the homes and hidden lives of writers Rudyard Kipling and Vita Sackville-West, as the trust works to preserve the houses, gardens and the writers' possessions.

**10.0** **Detectorists** (T) (R) Andy and Lance become eco-warriors.
**10.30** **Newsnight** (T) Weather
**11.05** **MOTDx** (T) (R) Football chat.
**11.35** **11 Minutes: America's Deadliest Mass Shooting** (T) (R) Documentary double bill.
**1.05** **Sign Zone** Panorama (T) **1.35** Our Changing Planet (T) (R) **2.35** Interior Design Masters (T) **3.35** This Is BBC Two (T)

## ITV1

**6.0** **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

**8.0** **Coronation Street** (T) Gary quizzes Faye about her feelings for Jackson. Steve and Tracy realise they will have to sell their businesses to pay the legal fees.
**9.0** **I'm a Celebrity South Africa Unseen** (T) Ant and Dec host a special episode featuring previously unseen clips from the series.

**10.0** **News** (T) Weather
**10.30** **Local News** (T) Weather
**10.45** FILM **The Proposal** (2009) (T) Romantic comedy.
**12.40** **English Football League Highlights** (T) (R) **1.30** Shop: Ideal World **3.0** I'm a Celebrity South Africa Unseen (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Ainsley's Caribbean Kitchen (T) (R)

## Channel 4

**6.05** **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T) **7.30** Unreported World (T)

**8.0** **The Big Interiors Battle** (T) The remaining designers face living room week, aware that judge Dara Huang is seeking the very best of design in each of their spaces. Presented by AJ Odudu.
**9.0** **Gogglebox** (T) The armchair critics share their opinions on what they have been watching during the week.

**10.0** **The Lateish Show With Mo Gilligan** (T)
**11.05** **Sean Lock: Purple Van Man** (T) (R) A 2013 comedy show.
**12.10** FILM **Trading Places** (John Landis, 1983) (T) Comedy. **2.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **2.55** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **5.05** Jamie's Comfort Food (T) (R) **5.15** Moneybags (T) (R)

## Channel 5

**6.0** **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Never Let You Go (Mike Hoy, 2021) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Michael Portillo's Pyrenees Adventure (T) (R)

**8.0** **Susan Calman's Grand Day Out** (T) The comic steers her campervan around some of the beauty spots of Devon.
**9.0** **Are You Being Served?: Secrets and Scandals** (T) (R) Behind the scenes of the sitcom, revealing how the show's creators had to fight the BBC throughout its run to keep it on air.

**10.0** FILM **Are You Being Served?** (1977) (T) Comedy spin-off.
**12.0** **The 70s: Songs from the Movie** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** The Yorkshire Vet (T) (R) **3.55** Witches: A Century of Murder (T) (R) **4.40** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.30** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

## BBC Four

**7.0** **Top of the Pops** (T) (R) From 1994, with Suede, Naomi Campbell and Cyndi Lauper. **7.30** Top of the Pops (T) (R) From 1994, with East 17, the Kinks and Shane MacGowan.

**8.0** **Top of the Pops** (T) (R) From 1983, with Blancmange, Wham! and the Beat.
**8.30** **Top of the Pops** (T) (R) From 1987, with Cameo, Whitney Houston and Starship.
**9.0** **Queens of Song at the BBC** (T) (R) Archive footage of female singers, including Beyoncé, Mariah Carey, Grace Jones and Cher.

**10.0** **Viva La Diva: The Queens of Pop** (T) (R) Ana Matronic explores the key elements that have shaped Beyoncé, Cher, Grace Jones, Madonna and Mariah Carey.
**11.0** FILM **Grace Jones: Bloodlight and Bami** (Sophie Fiennes, 2017) (T) Documentary.
**12.55** **Queens of Song at the BBC** (T) **1.55** Top of the Pops (T)

# Other channels

### BBC Three
**7.0pm** Top Gear **8.0** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond **8.30** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond **9.0** FILM Baby Done (2020) **10.25** I Kissed a Boy **11.15** I Kissed a Boy **12.05** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **1.05** Rookie Nurses **1.35** Rookie Nurses **2.05** Hot Property **2.35** My Mate's a Bad Date **3.0** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond **3.30** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond

### Dave
**6.0am** Teleshopping **7.10** Driving Wars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **9.0** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **9.40** Meet the Richardsons **10.20** Meet the Richardsons **11.0** QI XL **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

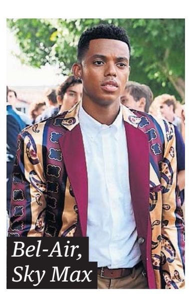
### E4
**6.0am** Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** FILM Ghost in the Shell (2017) **11.0** Naked Attraction **12.05** Naked Attraction **1.10** Gogglebox **2.15** First Dates **3.10** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.50** The Neighborhood

### Film4
**11.0am** FILM Tobruk (1967) **1.25** FILM The Quiet Man (1952) **4.15** FILM To Hell and Back (1955) **6.35** FILM Gods of Egypt (2016) **9.0** FILM Hereditary (2018) **11.35** FILM 48 Hrs (1982) **1.30** FILM Escape from New York (1981)

### ITV2
**6.0am** World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.05** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **9.0** FILM Fast & Furious 7 (2015) **11.45** Family Guy **12.40** American Dad! **1.10** American Dad! **1.35** Bob's Burgers **2.0** Bob's Burgers **2.30** Superstore **2.55** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

### Sky Max
**6.0am** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** A League of Their Own: European Road Trip **9.0** Bel-Air **10.0** Fast & Furious: Greatest Moments Refuelled **11.0** Strike Back: Shadow Warfare **12.0** The Force: North East **2.0** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol **5.30** Highway Patrol

### Sky Arts
**6.0am** Joseph Calleja: Lead Me Home **7.20** Pavarotti: The Duets - The Best of Pavarotti and Friends **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **10.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Claudette Colbert **12.0** National Treasures: The Art of Collecting **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** The Art of the Garden **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Rock Hudson **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Music Videos That Defined the 2000s **8.0** Guy Garvey: From the Vaults **9.0** The Yardbirds: Music Icons **9.30** Cream: Music Icons **10.0** Eric Clapton: Concert By the Lake - Band Du Lac **12.30** Bob Dylan: Trouble No More **1.50** The Rolling Stones: Charlie Is My Darling **3.10** Classic Albums **4.10** The Movies **5.0** Auction **5.30** Auction



*Bel-Air, Sky Max*

### Sky Atlantic
**6.0am** Fish Town **7.0** The Wire **10.0** True Blood **12.10** Game of Thrones **1.15** Ray Donovan **3.25** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Souls **11.0** Yellowjackets **1.10** Catherine the Great **2.15** Game of Thrones **3.15** Der Pass **4.15** Fish Town

# Radio

### Radio 3
**6.30am** Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (5/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Forma Antiqua play baroque music from José de Nebra to Boccherini. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Ulster Orchestra at Ulster Hall play Mozart Symphony No 36 "The Linz". Plus, early English music from L'Achéron. **4.30** The Listening Service (R) **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. At the Barbican, London, Sakari Oramo conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra, cellist Anssi Karttunen and soprano Anu Komsi in Kaija Saariaho's Du Cristal, Notes on Light, Saarikoski Songs and Circle Map. **10.0** The Verb **10.45** The Essay: De Waal's Itinerant Pots. Edmund de Waal reflects on a phone call with ceramicist Magdalene Odundo. (R) **11.0** Late Junction. Includes James Acaster's Mixtape. **1.0** Composed With Devonté Hynes **2.0** Piano Flow With Gabriels **3.0** Through the Night

### Radio 4
**6.0am** Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** Desert Island Discs (R) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Into the Night - A Year With the Police. By Matt Lloyd-Rose. (5/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Is Psychiatry Working (R) **11.30** Ed Reardon's Week (R) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Archive on 4: Whatever Happened to JB Priestley? (R) **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Frontlines of Journalism. How journalists should deal with repeated lies. (10/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** An Eye for a Killing. Drama, by Colin MacDonald. (4/5) **2.45** One to One (R) **3.0** Gardeners' Question Time **3.45** Short Works. The Suit, by Colin Carberry. **4.0** Last Word **4.30** Feedback **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** The News Quiz (4/7) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Screenshot. News and insights from the film world. (7/9) **8.0** Any Questions? From Kirkhill Community Centre in Inverness, with Labour peer Lord Falconer, SNP MSP Kate Forbes and Conservative peer Lord Forsyth. **8.50** A Point of View **9.0** Frontlines of Journalism* Omnibus (6-10/10) **9.59** Weather **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime (5/10) **11.0** Americast **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News and Weather **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News Briefing **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Please Protect Abraham: Silence (R)

### Radio 4 Extra
**6.0am** Shadows in Bronze (3/6) **6.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (6/6) **7.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (5/5) **7.15** Young Victoria (10/10) **7.30** Bridget Christie's Utopia (4/4) **8.0** Steptoe and Son (9/13) **8.30** Flying the Flag (5/8) **9.0** Act Your Age (1/6) **9.30** Bleak Expectations (3/6) **10.0** The One Before the Last **11.0** Shadows in Bronze (3/6) **11.30** Dr Finlay: The Further Adventures of a Black Bag (6/6) **12.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (5/5) **12.15** Young Victoria (10/10) **12.30** Bridget Christie's Utopia (4/4) **1.0** Steptoe and Son (9/13) **1.30** Flying the Flag (5/8) **2.0** Act Your Age (1/6) **2.30** Bleak Expectations (3/6) **3.0** The One Before the Last **4.0** Shadows in Bronze (3/6) **4.30** Dr Finlay (6/6) **5.0** Hello World: How to Be Human in the Age of the Machine (5/5) **5.15** Young Victoria (10/10) **5.30** Bridget Christie's Utopia (4/4) **6.0** Steptoe and Son (9/13) **6.30** Flying the Flag (5/8) **7.0** Act Your Age (1/6) **7.30** Bleak Expectations (3/6) **8.0** Victoria Wood: From Soup to Nuts (2/2) **8.30** A Good Read (7/8) **9.0** The Curious Cases of Rutherford & Fry (3/12) **9.30** A Gathering Light (5/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (10/15) **10.0** Mark Steel's in Town (4/6) **10.30** DMs Are Open (1/7) **11.0** Tim Key's Late Night Poetry Programme (2/6) **11.15** Knocker (2/6) **11.30** Les Kelly's Britain (2/4) **12.0** Dangerous Visions: Body Tourists **12.45** Someone Like You (3/5) **1.0** The One Before the Last **2.0** Shadows in Bronze (3/6) **2.30** Dr Finlay (6/6) **3.0** Hello World (5/5) **3.15** Young Victoria (10/10) **3.30** Bridget Christie's Utopia (4/4) **4.0** Steptoe and Son (9/13) **4.30** Flying the Flag (5/8) **5.0** Act Your Age (1/6) **5.30** Bleak Expectations (3/6)

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# SATURDAY

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The Guardian

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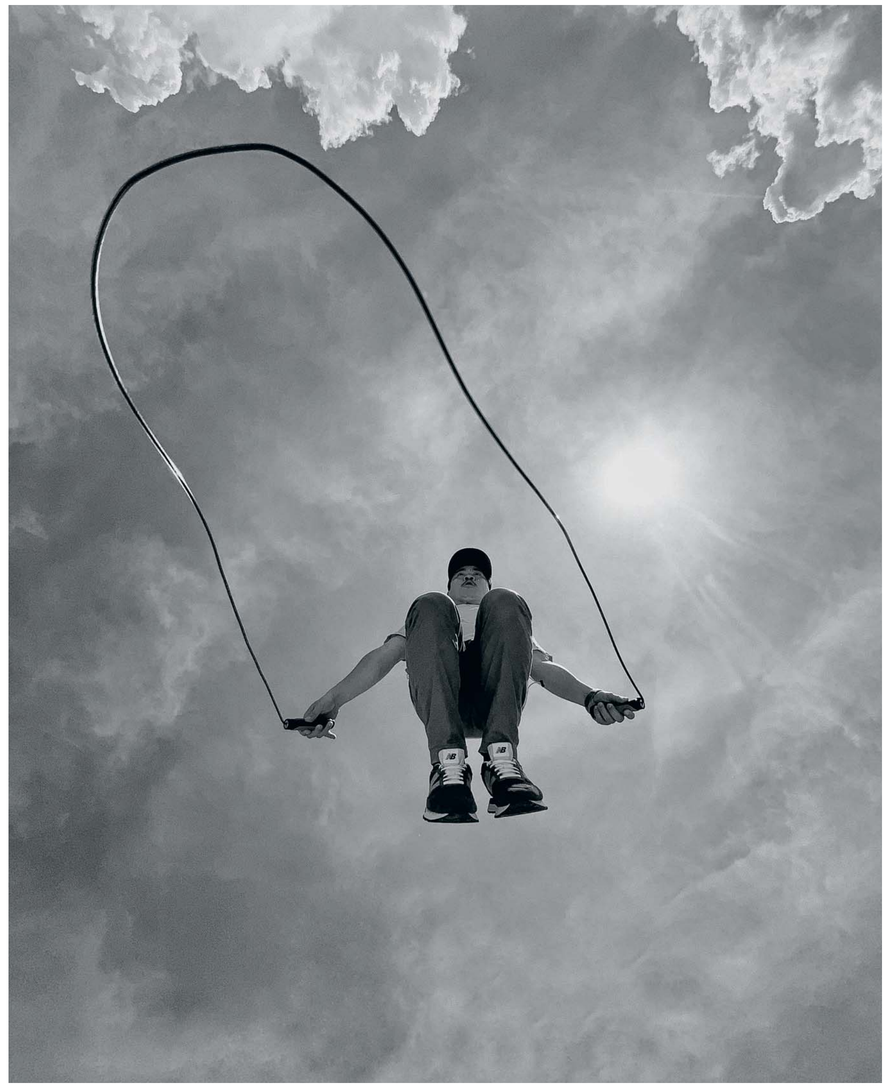
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## Smart shot
*The best pictures taken on phones*
**Leo Huang**



**Jumping Rope, 2022**
**Shot on iPhone 11**

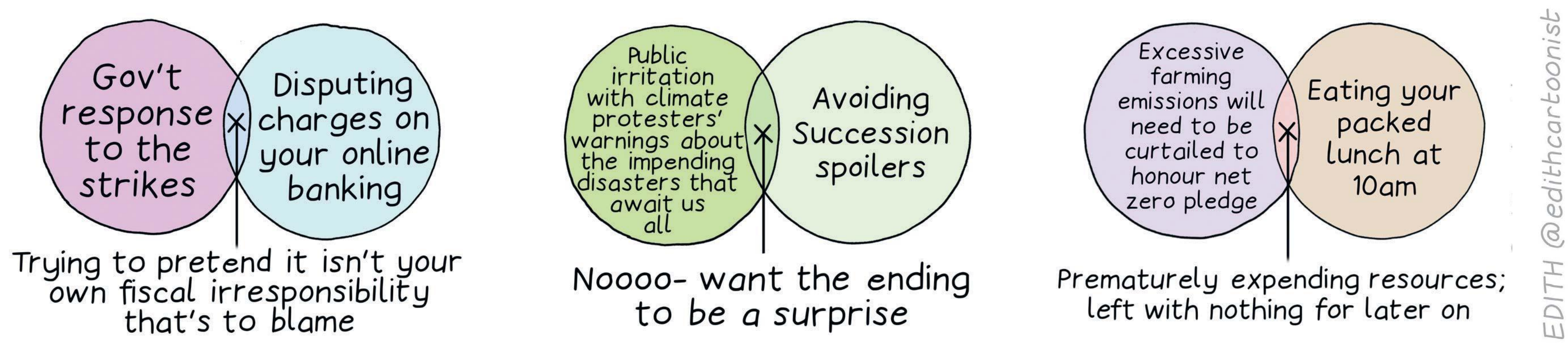
"There is a saying in photography," Leo Huang says. "The single most important component of a camera is the 12 inches behind it. The camera you use is important, yes, but your brain, ideas and imagination are what really matter."

Huang began skipping at the start of the Covid outbreak, using the rooftop above his home in Taiwan's Yilan City. "There is enough open space up there, and it meant I didn't have to go to the gym, which was closed anyway. I liked that skipping didn't need complicated or costly equipment and has so many benefits. People think it's a simple aerobic exercise, but it can help with depression, cardiopulmonary function and reducing fat."

He'd been thinking all morning about how to capture himself effectively, but his first attempts - with his iPhone 11 placed flat on the ground - didn't come out as he'd hoped. "I decided to turn on the wide-angle lens feature and use my Apple Watch to shoot continuously. I probably jumped down from a chair more than 50 times to get the shot." He was glad not to be using his normal camera: "I was afraid I might trample it!"

Once Huang was done, he converted the photo to black-and-white. "I always find the story stronger. If the colours are too rich, viewers can lose focus."
*Grace Holliday*

## Edith Pritchett A week in Venn diagrams




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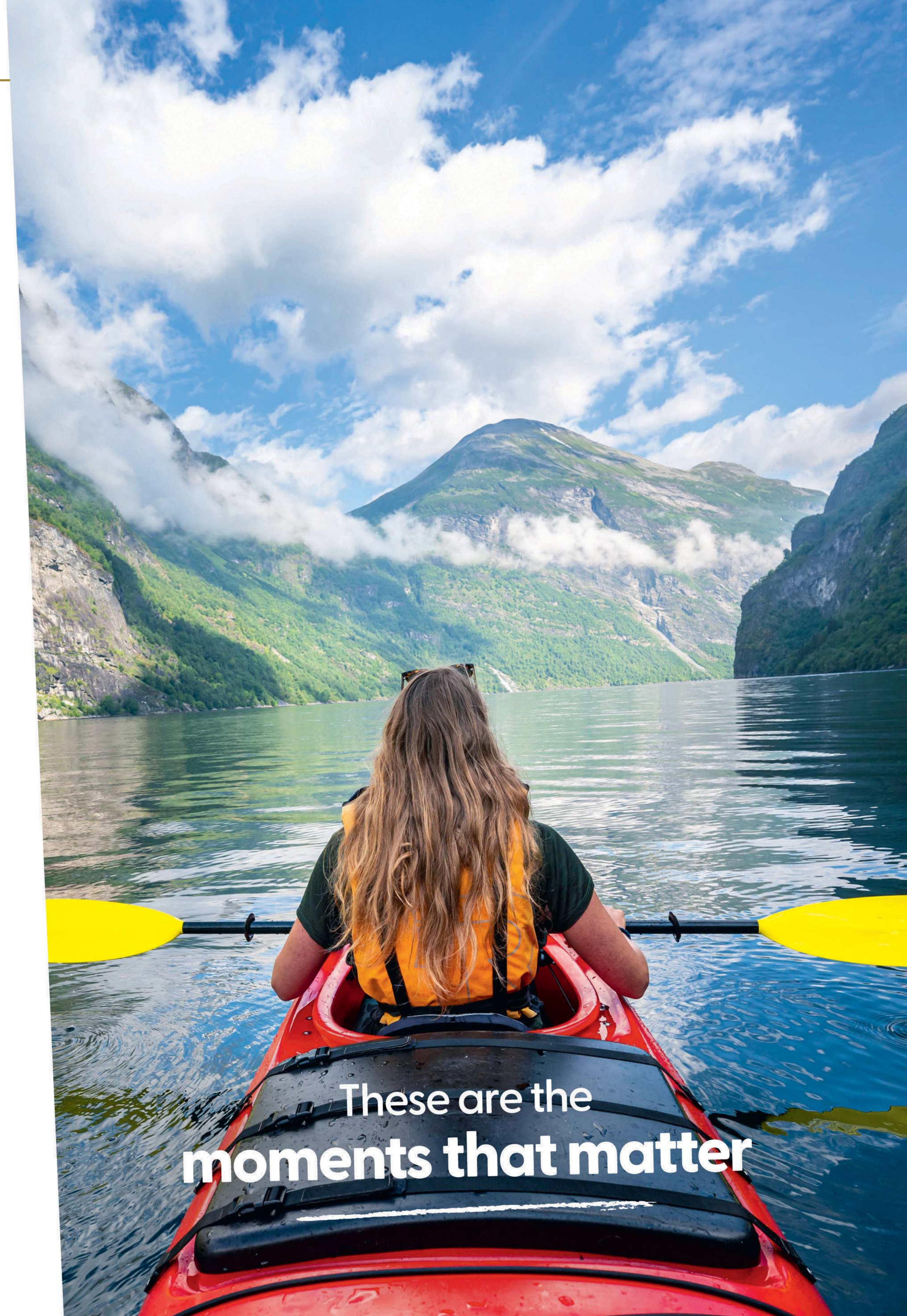
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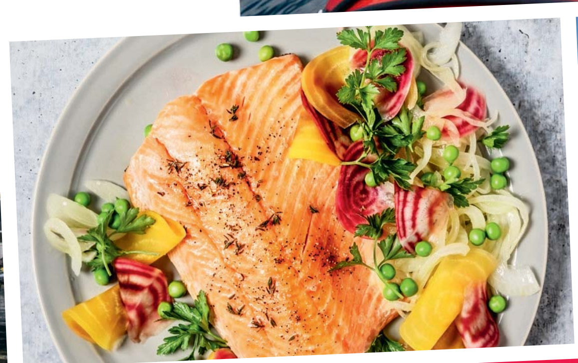
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*The snooker player on hating his nose, being accused of kidnapping, and why his career could have been even better*

# Q&A
# Ronnie O'Sullivan

*Interview: Rosanna Greenstreet*


KEN MCKAY/ITV/SHUTTERSTOCK

Raised in Essex, O'Sullivan, 47, won his first UK Championship at the age of 17. He is regarded as the greatest snooker player of all time, having won seven world, seven Masters and seven UK titles. He is currently the world No 1. He published his first autobiography, Ronnie, in 2003; his latest, Unbreakable, has just been released. He lives in Essex with actor Laila Rouass and has three children.

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?**
I've got no patience.

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?**
That they think they know it all.

**What is your most treasured possession?**
My snooker cue.

**Describe yourself in three words:**
Stubborn, driven and disciplined.

**What would your superpower be?**
To make people happy.

**What makes you unhappy?**
Feeling rushed.

**What do you most dislike about your appearance?**
My nose - it's big.

**If you could bring something extinct back to life, what would you choose?**
Muhammad Ali.

**Who would play you in the film of your life?**
Jack O'Connell wants to play me. He's a snooker fan.

**Who is your celebrity crush?**
Monica Bellucci.

**Would you choose fame or anonymity?**
Anonymity.

**Who would play me in the film of my life? Jack O'Connell wants to – he's a snooker fan**

**To whom would you most like to say sorry and why?**
Frank Adamson, my first coach, for not spending more time with him in his later years. I feel bad about that.

**What or who is the greatest love of your life?**
My dog Osho, a bichon frise.

**What does love feel like?**
It makes you feel like you want to live.

**What is the worst job you've ever done?**
Doing the audiobook of the first book. It was hard. I couldn't do that again.

**If you could edit your past, what would you change?**
I would go back to when I was 14 and keep to my own style of playing snooker. I was perfect, but I didn't think I was, so I started playing like everybody else and created bad habits. With a little more time, I could have been the ultimate player. I look at my career and I probably got 75% out of it instead of 100%.

**What single thing would improve the quality of your life?**
More time.

**What is your greatest achievement?**
Staying on the straight and narrow. I know I am an addict - I've got an addictive personality - but as long as it's not affecting my life or people around me then I think it's OK.

**What has been your closest brush with the law?**
I got falsely accused of a kidnapping when I was 17 or 18. It was scary: they took me and my mate in separately, strip-searched me, took my car away for forensics, put me in a white paper suit. I was like: "What's going on here?"

**Would you rather have more sex, money or fame?**
Money.

**How would you like to be remembered?**
As someone that loved what they did, embraced it wholeheartedly and never quit.

**What is the most important lesson life has taught you?**
Perspective. I used to zoom in and it would be all catastrophic, now I zoom out and get a bit of perspective.

**What happens when we die?**
I'd love to think there was a better ending, but we rot and disappear.

**'Suddenly it hit us: we've got to get the dogs out'** Greg Hagen and Wally at the scene of the fire in Seattle



# Experience
## *I helped rescue 100 dogs from a burning building*

*As told to Naomi Larsson*

Wally, my goldendoodle, has come to work with me every day since the start of the pandemic. He was there on the morning this February when a colleague came into my office and said, "The dog resort's on fire." My initial reaction was disbelief. I know the resort well – it's just across the road from my office and offers daycare and boarding services for pets. Wally had stayed there when he was a puppy.

I got up from my desk, and thought, "OK, Wally, you're staying here." He gets anxious when I leave, so I shut the door behind me.

It was a surprisingly nice day for that time of year in Seattle, but as I got outside I saw the big plume of grey-black smoke above us. You could smell it, too. The smoke was barrelling out from what looked like the middle of the single-storey warehouse-style building. I later found out the fire had been sparked in a dryer vent, causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage.

By that point, the firefighters were at the scene. There was so much noise. Suddenly it hit us: we've got to get the dogs out. A handful of colleagues, along with people from other nearby businesses, made their way to the building and started grabbing dogs that were being herded to the entrance by the firefighters inside.

We tried to catch the running dogs as fast as we could. Our offices have a big gated yard, so we started getting them in there. Some of my colleagues were helping secure the yard with plywood so the dogs couldn't escape.

It was incredibly frantic. We were lunging to grab a collar or get any kind of hold on them, then ushering them across the road. Some of them thought we were trying to play with them a bit, so it was a struggle. They were probably more confused than anything. Some dogs can be very sensitive, but luckily no one got bitten.

**We were lunging to grab a collar or get any kind of hold on them. It was frantic**

There were all breeds and sizes: a great dane, a bunch of labradors, doodles, little dogs, some that weighed 10lb at most. Most of the smaller dogs were scared, so part of the work was comforting them. We would pick them up and give them attention. One of the dogs we rescued had actually made its way up the street and pooped all over itself because it was so scared. I tried to be an affectionate and calming presence, saying, "It's gonna be OK."

Mostly, the dogs just wanted to keep on playing. Once we got them into our yard, they were running around and having a good old time within minutes. They have a short memory, for sure.

It seemed much more emotional for the owners. The fire was on the news and on Twitter; people were pulling up and leaving their cars in the middle of the road to hop out and search for their dogs. When they got to our fence and saw them, there were tears. People dropped to their knees with joy, knowing their dog was safe. It hit home for me, too – it could have been my own dog in there.

It took about three hours, but we got about 60 dogs into our makeshift pen. The rest were held at a nearby brewery, and even on a bus that came to help out. All the dogs from the centre, about 110 in total, were rescued. We eventually got them all into the animal control trucks to safely transport them to another location until the rest of the owners could pick them up.

While we waited for animal control, I remember a small dog, a little 10-pounder, came up to me and immediately put its paws up. I picked it up. We were both just happy and calm, coming down from the adrenaline, feeling grateful that the disaster was averted.

When I got back to Wally in my office, he gave me so much love. He's an affectionate dog and made the whole episode feel rewarding. It was very emotional seeing him again, knowing he could have been in the resort that day. I could only imagine that I would have had the same reaction as the people who came up to our fence looking for their dogs. I was just so thankful that he and all the other dogs were safe. But then it was time for clean-up duty. There was dog mess everywhere in the yard.

**Greg Hagen**

*Do you have an experience to share? Email experience@theguardian.com*

Portrait: Annabel Clark

*Alan, 51 –* **thinks independence would bring big investment – and the return of expats**




*Martin, 72 –* **argues that giving the Scottish government more powers would be risky**

# Dining across the divide

## *Can breaking bread bridge political differences?*

*Interview: Sam Wollaston*

- *Alan, 51, Edinburgh*
**Occupation** *Design manager*
**Voting record** *Mostly SNP, but has voted Labour in the past. Describes himself as "leftwing moderate"*
**Amuse bouche** *Alan, a republican, once drank champagne at Buckingham Palace. A friend of a friend was a footman; Alan was smuggled in for drinks in the staff quarters. "I didn't bump into anyone in their dressing gown, unfortunately"*

- *Martin, 72, Edinburgh*
**Occupation** *Economist for investment research firm, officially retired*
**Voting record** *Martin lived in Canada for 34 years and returned a year ago, but would probably have voted Conservative*
**Amuse bouche** *Martin played drums in a band that once supported the Kinks*

**For starters**
*Alan* Martin had salmon and I had scallops. We both had a glass of wine, and a glass of fizz. Martin was friendly and bubbly. I thought: we're going to have a nice discussion.
*Martin* I was surprised to find out Alan's first degree was in Japanese and he had lived in China, Bali, Thailand and Macau. So we'd both spent a lot of time overseas. It was comfortable, no one got overexcited.

**The big beef**
*Alan* I think independence would be worthwhile for Scotland and that stretches beyond the emotional. It has always felt like we are playing second fiddle to England, and patronised in the media. And over the last 20 years the sense of British culture I was once proud of has been chipped away. Standards of public service have been eroded. Maybe it's a good time for a reset, to start again as an independent country.
*Martin* In the 90s, I lived in Quebec, where there was a similar move to separate from the rest of Canada. Their referendum was incredibly close, missed by less than 1%. Having lived through that and the trouble it caused didn't make me warm to it happening in Scotland. But I'm a data-oriented, analytical person and when you go through the arguments it doesn't make a lot of sense.
*Alan* I am shaped by my experience of living in Asia. I was in Shanghai for three years and in that time two whole metro lines were built. The trains throughout the country are amazing, much more advanced than anything we have. I don't think Edinburgh could become Singapore – we agreed there is a different culture, mentality, work ethic. But I do think a new, smaller country would lead to investment and maybe attract people back who have been living abroad.
*Martin* I'm proud to be Scottish. We already feel and act like an independent nation – we have our own legal and education systems. If you ask someone from Scotland where they're from, they will always say Scotland. Why do you need to formalise it and, in doing so, create lots of potential disruption? I wouldn't want to give this government any more powers than it already has. It would be very risky with very little obvious reward.

**Sharing plate**
*Martin* He thinks the Scottish proposals on gender were inappropriate and that 16 is too young for people to be making big decisions about their gender, and I agree.
*Alan* It's a side issue that only affects a small minority, when there are big issues like education, Scotland's NHS, failing infrastructure. No one can disagree that people should have rights, but I think 16 is too young for any long-term life decision.

**For afters**
*Martin* There was some difference about the monarchy. I don't mind them, but I'd prefer a more European monarchy – a queen who bicycles to work rather than all the pomp and circumstance, multiple palaces, dukes and earls and hangers-on. I hope we'll transition towards that with Kate and William.
*Alan* What annoys me is things like the BBC telling me the royal coach now has electrified windows. Keep that for your monarchy magazines, not the six o'clock news. People in Scotland don't care when it comes to the coronation – we'll sit in the back garden and get drunk. There won't be any bunting hanging at mine. I'd get rid of them.

**Takeaway**
*Alan* You don't want to become entrenched, and to sit down with someone and have a candid discussion about current events makes you re-evaluate what you think.
*Martin* An interesting and pleasant experience. Our interests outside what we talked about weren't the same. He's got a big garden and spends a lot of time doing that. I'm addicted to pickleball.

*Alan and Martin ate at the Tollhouse in Edinburgh; tollhouse.scot. Want to meet someone from across the divide? Go to theguardian.com/different-views*

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ADDITIONAL REPORTING: KITTY DRAKE

*Portrait: Sofia Conti*

# Flashback

## *Annie Mac on growing up in a large family in Dublin, and swapping DJing for writing*

*Interview: Harriet Gibsone*
*Main portrait: Pål Hansen*
*Styling: Gemma Hansen*

## 1987 I was wild, feral and very comfortable in a tree



Born in Dublin in 1978, Annie Macmanus rose to fame in the noughties as a radio DJ specialising in electronic music. Her two-decade career has included 17 years at BBC Radio 1, including taking over its flagship evening show, as well being one of the biggest live DJs in Europe and programming festivals. In 2021, Macmanus switched gear: publishing a bestselling novel, Mother Mother, and launching a podcast, Changes. Her new novel, The Mess We're In, is out now. She lives in London with her husband, the DJ Toddla T, and their two children.

**This image is very emblematic of me as a kid.** I am nine and in Marlay Park in south Dublin, where I grew up. I was wild, feral and very comfortable in a tree. Although I am high up, I look so comfy – so comfy that I've slipped my feet out of my shoes. My expression and body language is saying: "This is nothing!"

I am the youngest of a large family, so by the time I came along, the fussing of parenting had melted away and the general attitude was: "You're left to your own devices. You're alive and clean-ish. Grand." At this point, I would have been spending my school-free days down the green – a little patch of grass about 50 yards from the housing estate where I grew up. I would play football all day with the boys, then I would climb trees. As it started to get dark, my mum would call me in for dinner, and if it was Saturday, my weekly bath. I was really active and had such lovely friends. It was a very good time.

**Because of the little girl that I was, I resisted the idea of puberty** and I didn't want to know anything about becoming a teenager. My mum was very kind and never wanted to pressure or embarrass me, but I remember her coming home one day and presenting me with a book [about puberty]. I didn't want to read it – in fact, I ran out of the room. I knew what it meant, what it symbolised, and I couldn't deal with it.

Of course, the hormones hit me eventually. My social group used to call periods The Confidence. I remember in assembly nudging my friend and saying: "I've got The Confidence!" It was a big deal. The move from primary to secondary school is a seismic one and that wild, feral side started to diminish.

While the carefreeness of my young childhood had drifted, I handled the shift as well as I could. I was really lucky in that I never felt oversexualised during those teenage years. Nobody ever pushed me into looking feminine. Naturally, I eventually did what most girls do: I wore short skirts and kissed boys. I still went through a period of hating my body and being confused about it, however. I had gone from this unselfconscious kid to becoming obsessed with my size, from the age of 15 onwards. I grew up in the 90s and that whole decade of heroin chic, Kate Moss and trousers hanging off your hip bones really got to me. It was impossible not to feel affected by the media and how skeletal bodies were deemed desirable. My body wasn't like that, nor was anyone's I knew. But it didn't stop me thinking something was wrong with me.

**I had a huge awakening in my mid-teens.** I was always surrounded by noise – I had two brothers and a sister, and at any given time in our house people would be playing the piano, guitar, the mandolin, the bouzouki, the bodhrán, the accordion or the saxophone. But discovering music for myself was really identity-shaping. The first was a Guns N' Roses double cassette of Use Your Illusion, which made me feel as if I'd arrived. Then came Massive Attack's Blue Lines, all the Blur albums, Portishead's Dummy and Goldie's Timeless. Dublin was small and these albums were like doors opening to different worlds.

In 2001, I left Farnborough where I was doing a postgrad in radio and moved in with my brother Davey and the rock band he was in [the Crocketts, and later the Crimea]. Before then, my life was edging closer to the precipice of the adventure of adulthood, but moving to London was jumping into the pool. We lived in an old dilapidated house in Forest Gate in east London. It was quite the time. He and the band used to be away for long periods while I was hustling hard and working three different jobs. They would come home from the tour and the hall and corridor would be freshly painted lilac, because I just needed something to do between work. I was so ambitious and hungry for new experiences while also living so unhealthily and being completely skint. It was a real oversensory period that felt thrilling, exciting and

ARCHIVE IMAGE: COURTESY OF ANNIE MAC. THANKS TO PHOENIX CANOE CLUB & OUTDOOR CENTRE





**2023** As I get older, I feel more in tune with my body. The fact I can climb a tree at 44 is huge

uncomfortable, with big highs but doors slammed in my face, too.

Two years later, I got my first job at the BBC. I remember ringing my Dad from the desk at Radio 1 and saying: "I got a permanent job!" He's always been so supportive of whatever I've wanted, but like a lot of parents he was keen on me being secure, so getting a job at this big British institution reassured him that I would be sorted.

**Two years after my first job as an assistant, I got my own show.** I worked really hard and was keen to please. I suppose that's from being the youngest in the family: my unofficial role at home growing up was to be the one who makes everyone laugh; to make sure the whole room was happy.

It was in my mid-30s when I decided to reassess my life and left Radio 1 [in 2021]. I was overwhelmed by my career and motherhood. I'd lost myself to this drive to achieve and push myself forward. It had consumed me to a point where it was detrimental to my mental health. Throughout my life, success had meant more ticket sales, more listeners - a graph with the line going up, up, up, up. These days, success is feeling secure in myself. Being connected to people. Being there for the ones you love.

**I've also had to learn when to say no** - to the point where I've probably gone too far and should probably say yes to a few more things! Socialising is particularly important now, as being a novelist can be isolating. In many ways, so is DJing, but I have still found adjusting to being a writer difficult. With radio, you collaborate with a team, you build a show every day and there's a direct connection with the listeners - which is in contrast to rattling around on your own in the house all day. So much so that I'm thinking of joining a choir.

The best thing about getting older is that I feel more in tune with my body, now more than ever. When I was nine, my relationship with it was: does it function and does it get me up this tree? After that, I went through years and years of losing my confidence. But now I am in awe of my body and its ability. The fact that I am able to climb a tree at 44 is huge and I have a whole new sense of awareness of how fragile it is, how lucky I am.

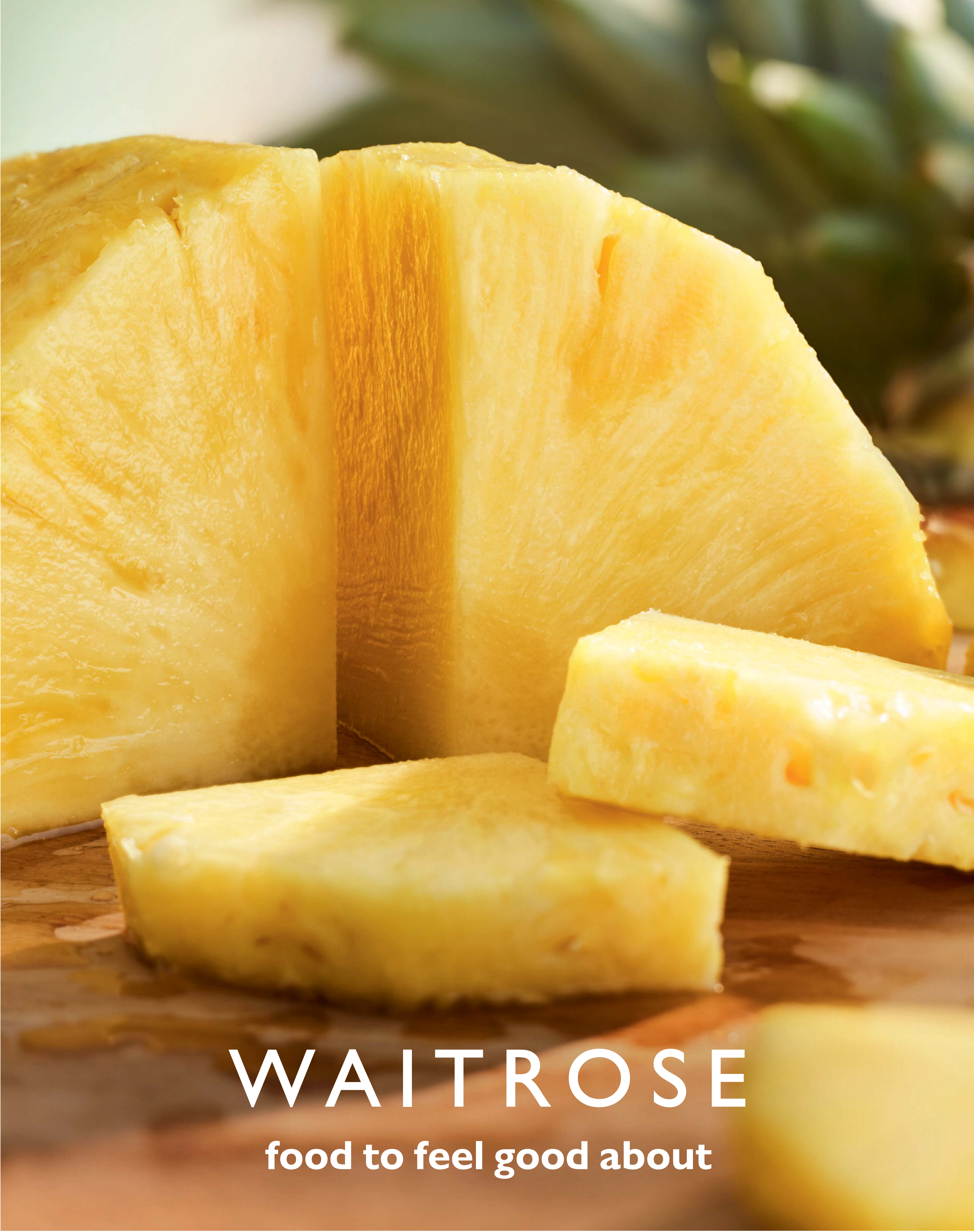
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# BEWARE: ANIMALS

When at the height of the pandemic raccoons and mountain goats started roaming locked-down streets, it seemed nature was laughing at us. More than ever, the relationship between humans and wildlife has been disrupted – will we face even deadlier threats than Covid if we don't mend our ways? By *Simon Schama*

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Previous pages: a raccoon in Central Park, New York, April 2020. Clockwise from left: goats wander through deserted streets in Llandudno, north Wales, March 2020; capybara in the upscale area of Nordelta, Buenos Aires; monkeys in Lopburi, in central Thailand

PA: LAUREN DECICCA/THE GUARDIAN; REUTERS; PREVIOUS PAGES: AFP/GETTY IMAGES

IN MARCH 2021, THE 13TH MONTH of the Covid confinement, the peepers, in their vast multitudes, sang out again. Down in the swampy wetlands below our house in Hudson Valley, New York, millions of *Pseudacris crucifer* ("cross-bearing false locusts" but actually minute frogs) puffed up their air sacs and warbled for a mate. That's spring for you. The peepers are so tiny – an inch or so long – that you'll never see one, no matter how carefully you creep up on them. Their blown-out song bags are nearly as big as the rest of them; it's all they are: innocently inflated peeps of expectation.

They are not alone. In recent years, the soprano peepers have been accompanied by a bass rhythm section – wood frogs, *Lithobates sylvaticus*, a tattoo of deep quacking, punctuated by raspy burps. They and the peepers survive bitter winters by means of antifreeze cryoprotectants stored within their bodies. When ice crystals begin to form on their skins, their livers flood the bloodstream with glucose, sending vital organs like the heart, its beating paused, into a dormant but protected state. Seventy per cent of the frogs' body water can then freeze without compromising the organs that will magically reawaken in the spring.

To help matters, wood frogs can recycle urea through their urine. So if you were to come across a wood frog in deep winter, or expose a tiny peeper beneath the leaf litter, their sparkling, gelid rigidity would lead you to assume they were dead. A twist from your fingers could snap a leg. So don't do that, for as the Hudson Valley light goes pearly and the afternoons stretch out, the superficial body ice of the frogs melts away and, along with that decrystallising resurrection, wild singing begins: at first a mere teatime tuning up by scattered vocalists, but by sunset building into a massive chorus, an entire Albert Hall-ful of peepers. There is always mating business to be getting on with and only a month or so to get it done. Quick, quack, peep. The teeming amphibians ecstatically multiplied, even as much of humanity sank into another engulfing wave of infection.

IT'S A COMMONPLACE (but no less true for being so) that the empty desolation of cities, the grim, still, silence of locked-down streets and squares, was offset by the irrepressible burgeoning of nature. We saw it – the budding and blossoming, the buzzing and butterfly-fluttering on our walks in parks and on heaths, in our gardens and on windowsills. While we hunkered and cowered, and ordered home delivery, flora rioted; fauna trespassed. Parliaments of legislators were reduced to socially distanced barking from the hollow shell of their chambers, while parliaments of birds



flocked and chattered. We tweeted with our fingers; they tweeted with their lungs. Those with the sweetest song showed off, none more liquidly around here, in Hudson Valley, than the Carolina wren nesting under our barbecue.

The more we retreated into digitally numbed companionship, the more brazenly the company of animals advanced towards us. Morning roadkill was evidence of nocturnal roaming and rambling by hitherto seldom-seen critters. On the path leading to a local arts centre, weasels and milk snakes lay side by side, cartoonishly flattened, as if mutually KO'd in a small-hours brawl. At the entrance to our local woodland trail, a sign advised walkers not to make nice with the black bears. Everything, except us, seemed to be emboldened. Reporting on record fox sightings in her London neighbourhood, a friend chuckled, "It's laughing at us, nature is." So it was: the low chuckle of gallows humour.

But the joke's on us. Things are amiss. Species are out of place, or incautiously testing human presumptions about where their place actually lies, and what its boundaries might be. Lockdowns or not, migrants, two-legged and four, are on the move to wherever subsistence beckons.

In north Wales, mountain goats from the Great Orme munching potted petunias off Llandudno windowsills supplied much-needed online entertainment. But the crashing of barriers between wild and domestic spaces has an ominous side. Displacement is a symptom of ecosystems under stress. The capybara roaming through the upscale gardens of houses in Nordelta on the outskirts of Buenos Aires would not be there had not the suburb been built by draining extensive areas of the Luján River delta, robbing the metre-long rodents of their natural habitat. The relentless growth of Mumbai – a million new residents a year – has pushed its eastern and western suburbs into areas normally reserved for leopards, specifically the 100 sq km of the Sanjay Gandhi wildlife sanctuary. Deprived of prey, the big cats have strayed beyond the preserve. At least 50 of them have taken up residence within the city, sustaining themselves from the enormous population of feral dogs, occasionally sampling an amuse-bouche of a dachshund or a Siamese cat.

The causes and consequences of this ecological disruption are complicated. On the one hand, it's not good for the leopards to become Mumbai street creatures; on the other, they are doing the bloated metropolis a favour by culling the feral dog packs, which often include rabid animals. But then again, there would not be so many of those wild dogs were it not for the introduction, a decade ago, of diclofenac, an anti-inflammatory drug commonly used for livestock in the 1990s, which ended up driving the third player in this urban drama – white-rumped vultures – to near extinction as a result of scavenging drugged cattle. A south Asian vulture population of 40 million in the 1980s now numbers around 19,000 40 years later. This is more than a catastrophic species loss, bad enough though that is. The dramatic depletion of vultures has unpicked the ecological threads that have tied human and animal culture together in India for centuries. The reverent freedom given to sacred cows by Hinduism, so that they might wander the streets until their bodies lie down in peaceful death, depended on the working assumption that carcasses would be cleaned by scavenging vulture flocks. Without the vultures, decomposing cattle have attracted rats and feral dogs, whose numbers have increased exponentially as the birds have disappeared. A collateral result is the steeply rising incidence of rabid attacks on humans, many of them fatal.

Mutuality between humans and animals has been dangerously disrupted. Temple monkeys, long conditioned to exist symbiotically with humans, and largely dependent on pilgrims and tourists for their food, turned combative as a result of the abrupt withdrawal of their customary diet. The Thai temple city of Lopburi has seen gangs of macaques, in their thousands, engage in violent street battles over scraps of discarded food, while residents barricaded themselves in their houses against the rampaging primates. There is good reason for their fear. Macaques are reservoir carriers of herpes B – McHV1 – often lethal for humans.

Disruption-born contagions are happening in domestic as well as exotic places. A serious malady generated by ecological displacement arrived almost 50 years ago and parked itself on the vegetation of the American dream: the suburban lawn. During my first year in


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New York state in 1994, it found me, and was no fun at all: three months of piercing headaches, spells of dizziness, and sharp, arthritic muscle pain, before an antibiotic got the better of it. The infecting agent of Lyme disease (named after Old Lyme, Connecticut, where it was first diagnosed and analysed) is a corkscrew-shaped spirochaete found in white-footed mice and sometimes in other small mammals like chipmunks. Not only do those mice survive the excavation and shredding of the woodland habitat for house construction, they positively thrive on the alteration, overwintering in the suburban estates that have displaced their native habitat.

The rodents function as reservoirs for the dormant but immanent spirochaete. Enter black-legged ticks, needing blood meals at each change in their life cycle, from larva to nymph to adult. A feed on the mice absorbs the spirochaete, which is then transferred to white-tailed deer, upon which the ticks lodge in huge numbers, especially on the ears and around the nose. The deer have themselves multiplied abundantly on the borderland between old forests and the herbicide-saturated, brilliantly lurid carpet lawns of "colonial" McMansions. Suburbanites are accustomed to watching white-tailed deer emerge from their woodland cover to graze their shrubs or settle on lawn pasture. During the pandemic, fear of urban contagiousness led to departures from cities by those who could afford to do so. But clearcutting for suburban construction to meet the quickened demand has brought new residents ever closer to those ubiquitous reservoirs of disease – white-footed mice. Even as house-dwellers awaited their next delivery of online-ordered groceries, black-legged ticks hung on the blades of those hyperfertilised lawns, primed for their next blood meal.

THIS SHRINKING OF DISTANCE between wild and human habitats has also encouraged the long-distance traffic in wild animals. In 2005, it was estimated that each year of the previous decade had seen the live trafficking of 40,000 primates, 640,000 reptiles, 4 million birds and 350 million fish, numbers that have almost certainly increased in the years since. In 2017, China's National Key Research and Development Programme estimated the value of wildlife trades for medical sales and food consumption at 520bn yuan (£60bn). Pangolins – scaly anteaters found in both sub-Saharan Africa and south-east Asia – are, since the enforcement of restrictions against ivory, the most commonly trafficked mammals of all. Malayan pangolins are served in high-end restaurants in south-east Asia, especially in Vietnam, where they are both the most popular wild delicacy on the menu and, at £120 for 450g, the most expensive. Assuming you have remembered to order your pangolin three hours in advance, the manager of the Thiên Vuong Tuu (Alcohol of the Gods) restaurant in Ho Chi Minh City will personally bring the live animal to your table and slit its throat to assure you of the unimpeachable freshness of the upcoming dish.

Unlike sources of ivory, pangolins are pathetically easy to catch. Their scaly covering may pose a challenge for animal predators, but when they are shaken from a tree or a bushy hideaway, the perfectly curled-up ball into which they form themselves is a pangolin harvester's perfect convenience. Into the bag go the scaly balls and into the truck goes the bagful. Tens of thousands of these animals are caught this way every year, most of them merely for the scales, which, when ground finely, are advertised as promoting lactation, helping to heal sores and rashes, banishing headaches and curing anorexia, infertility and pretty much anything else that might ail you. The fact that the scales are entirely keratin, and thus ingesting them is no more medical help than eating chewed fingernails, has no effect on the size and success of the pangolin market, which asks £2,400 for a kilogram of scales plucked from the roasted animals.

An ironic consequence of the rise in demand for animal-sourced remedies is that they have ended up contributing to the ailments they are thought to cure. In the spring of 2020, a group of Chinese scientists published analyses of coronavirus-infected pangolins confiscated from smugglers in 2017 and 2018 by customs officials at Guangdong. The receptor-binding domain of the virus was 97% identical with that of Sars-CoV-2. Though this is not enough to clinch the case for pangolins being the intermediary host for the virus between a reservoir mammal like a bat and the end destination in humans, it adds to the growing evidence that the waves of terrifying diseases coming at the world faster and faster are almost always zoonotic. They are the direct result of what we have done to our planetary habitat. Climate change has added to the witches' brew, since the flooding that comes with extreme weather events has created more breeding pools for disease-carrying mosquitoes, which, thanks to global warming, now also have an extended season in which to multiply. The massively extended disease ranges of West Nile virus and Zika virus are the result. In a disconcertingly gothic footnote that Mary Shelley would have appreciated, the melting of glaciers on the Tibet-Qinghai border into a vast saline lake has revealed viruses dated to 15,000 years ago and said to be unlike any yet known to contemporary science.

The years since 1980 have seen outbreaks of new infections at a rate of one every eight months in hot zones from Brazil to central Africa to south-east Asia, most of them viral. They include the catastrophes of HIV and Ebola, as well as Sars and H5N1 bird flu. The routinisation of long-distance trade in animals has speeded up the pace of these contagions. H5N1 originated in two mountain eagles illegally transported to Belgium from Thailand; chytridiomycosis, the fungal disease that made 90 species of amphibians extinct, was spread by the international traffic in African clawed frogs.

Sickness in animals has, inevitably, made its way into the human population transporting, marketing and consuming them. Mpox (formerly known as monkeypox), first identified in 1958 in macaques, has reservoirs in striped mice, giant pouched rats, African rope squirrels and brush-tailed porcupines. A first American outbreak in 2003 has been traced to some of those exotic animals being housed with prairie dogs for the wild pet trade. The jump of the disease from animal to human populations in Africa is itself a cascade of all the disruptions – demographic, social and environmental – that have stirred new contagions from dormancy. For 40 years, no human cases of Mpox were recorded. But between 1970 and 2018 the population of Nigeria almost quadrupled from nearly 56 million to 195 million. The demographic explosion drove the conversion of rainforest to farmland and conurbations, along with the migration of reservoir species of animals into cities. A series of floods generated by climate change accelerated this migration, and, ironically, the termination of smallpox vaccination programmes due to the announced declaration of the extinction of the disease in 1980 weakened immunity to the closely related Mpox virus. From two African zones – west Africa and the chronically war-ravaged Democratic Republic of the Congo – the international trade in wildlife exported the disease to the US and beyond.

Dead pangolins seized by authorities in Indonesia, 2017



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

## IN HOT ZONES SINCE 1980, THERE HAS BEEN AN OUTBREAK OF ONE NEW INFECTION EVERY EIGHT MONTHS

The Sars epidemic of 2003-04, only barely contained, has been traced back to the meat of masked palm civets, shredded and combined with chrysanthemum petals and minced snake to make the high-priced delicacy "dragon-tiger-phoenix soup", served in upmarket restaurants in south China. The virus jumped, not to civet-eaters, but to others in the supply chain leading to the dish: breeders of captive civets held in filthy cages in Guangdong, transporters, slaughterers and cooks. It gets worse (or better) for an opportunistic virus. In Thailand, captive populations of masked palm civets are fed exclusively on coffee bean "cherries" which, as they travel through the gastro-intestinal tract, have the acidity extracted from them by the action of digestion-aiding enzymes. The neat piles of coffee cherries packed in civet excreta will then end up as your speciality java of the day, expensively priced on the market. Imagine how many opportunities there might be for a virus to make the jump from an infected animal to a civet-shit gatherer slaving on minimum wage. Venti latte, anyone?

Although a letter to Nature Medicine in March 2020 from Kristian Andersen and four microbiologist colleagues argued, on the basis of genomic analysis, that "it is improbable that Sars-CoV-2 emerged from the laboratory manipulation of a related Sars-CoV-like coronavirus" and that it was more likely to have come from an animal reservoir – like *Rhinolophus affinis*, the intermediate horseshoe bat – there is, at the time of writing, no definitive verdict on the virus's aetiology. Live mammals known to be susceptible to Sars, such as hog badgers, foxes and (especially) raccoon dogs sold for both fur and meat, were stored and sold in quantities at the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan, and the first known infected person was a vendor there. In March 2023, raw genetic data taken from swabs around the stacked cages of raccoon dogs showed that an animal did indeed carry the Sars-CoV-2 virus, although whether it contracted the infection independently in the wild or was infected by a human remains as yet unproven. In January 2023, 155 microbiologists joined a commentary by the editor of the Journal of Virology, Felicia Goodrum, asking, optimistically, for a less politicised "rational discourse" on the subject, stating that "at this time and based on the available data, there is no compelling evidence" supporting either "an accident" or "nefarious actors" at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. That still remains the case, since data supporting the US Department of Energy's "low confidence" opinion, made public in February 2023, that a lab leak was the likely origin of the virus, remains classified.

Unfortunately, there may never be a definitive explanation of the origin of Sars-CoV-2, but there is no doubt that the closeness between human and wild animal populations has enabled "reverse zoonosis": viral leaps from humans to non-humans, and then back again. It is thought by some epidemiologists that this is the

route that the Omicron variant of Covid-19 took, mutation taking place in infected rats which then transmitted an adapted virus back to humans. On 23 February 2023, Cambodian health authorities reported the death of an 11-year-old girl in Prey Veng province from H5N1, the virus responsible for the current pandemic of influenza in wild and domestic bird populations. The virus had already made the jump from avians to mammals including Peruvian seals and Spanish mink. At the time of writing, although the Cambodian girl's father also tested positive for H5N1 infection, there is as yet no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission. But the likely epidemiological implication of this news from Cambodia has already made the World Health Organization (the WHO) state that the report is "worrying". Wildlife, intensively fed and bred livestock, and humans to all intents and purposes, now constitute a common planetary reservoir of perpetually evolving and mutating micro-organisms, some of them baleful. The Global Virome Project, established, as its name suggests, to coordinate worldwide research, estimates that there are 1.6m potential zoonotic viruses in the world with just 1% of them currently identified and analysed.

All this is happening at ever briefer intervals. Demography remakes geography, transforming – right now, and not for the better – the future of life on Earth.

BY THE END OF 2021, up to 18 million people had died, worldwide, from Covid-19 infection, according to some estimates. You would suppose that in the face of a pandemic – an outbreak that by definition is global – together with a recognition of shared vulnerability, governments and politicians might have set aside the usual mutual suspicions and, under the aegis of the WHO, agreed on common approaches to containment, vaccination and control. Needless to say, nothing remotely like that has happened. If anything, the reverse has been the case: responses to the pandemic sharply diverged, even within entities like the European Union, ostensibly committed to common policies. Decisions taken by individual US states on vaccination requirements and mask mandates thwarted federal guidelines, deepening the already bitter cultural divisions between "red" and "blue" America. Ron DeSantis, the Republican governor of Florida, cast himself as the voice of Regular Folks' mistrust of expert opinion handed down from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: the people's anti-Fauci.

To some extent, the raising of walls, psychological and institutional, is understandable. The instinctive reaction to contagion breaking out somewhere distant is to erect barriers against its importation. For a while, geographically isolated countries like New Zealand benefited from the possibility of self-sealing. But two years' experience of the pandemic, in particular the unpredictable incidence of recurring outbreaks and viral mutations, has made the locking off of discrete zones of exclusion all but impossible. The need for an alternative, transnational approach to containment, mitigation and protection, coordinated by the WHO, has never been more urgent. The geographically uneven and glaringly unequal supply and delivery of vaccines and therapeutic drugs has only underlined this need. Because mutations arise most easily in thinly vaccinated populations, the comment of Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO director general, that "until everyone is vaccinated no one will be safe" ought to have been an epidemiological truism.

This was not, however, the attitude of the then US president. At the end of May 2020, during the most desperate early days of the pandemic, Donald Trump announced that the US would be withdrawing from the WHO. His major justification was to complain that the organisation had become a pawn of the Chinese government and had, in effect, been an accomplice of Beijing's efforts to disguise the origin of the Covid outbreak. In Trump's view, this meant that China and the WHO, working as collaborators, had knowingly unleashed the contagion on the world with the unpardonable consequence (if not actual intention) of damaging his re-election prospects. They had had the audacity to launch the embarrassment virus with millions of fatalities as collateral damage. Whether or not Covid-19 was the result of a lab leak at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, it is undeniable that China did initially play down the magnitude of the outbreak in Wuhan. The WIV was not at all transparent in making documentation of its experiments with genetically manipulated viruses available, yet the WHO was prepared to take on trust Chinese statements, such as they were, about the origin and spread of the disease. It was, however, far from alone in this incuriousness. In the early stages of the outbreak, there was no more ardent cheerleader for Xi Jinping and his government's Covid measures than Trump himself. "China has been working very hard to contain the coronavirus," he said in January 2020, and a month later, "I think China's handled it [Covid] really well."

Once, however, Trump concluded that China had weaponised its own epidemiological dishonesty and incompetence expressly to make him look bad, his mentions of the virus invariably came with a tag of culpability, as in "the China virus" or more facetiously "the kung flu". There is a history to attaching misleading nicknames to pandemics, the better to characterise them as an alien plague falling upon a vulnerable homeland. Although the first documented cases of the horrific influenza outbreak of 1918 occurred in a military establishment in Kansas, the pandemic became known as "the Spanish flu", principally as a result of that country's willingness (unlike belligerents in Europe) to report candidly on the severity and extent of the contagion. In no time at all, discussion about the origin and transmission routes of Covid had likewise collapsed into the usual mire of military metaphors, so that its progress became an "invasion" against which "defences" had to be manned, battles fought, conquests pursued, to a decisive "victory". Politically, it was all too easy for populist leaders, like Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, infuriated by their impotence in the face of a microbial "enemy", to emerge from an initial state of denial into a nationalist blame game; somehow, some other force, some other nation, was responsible for their country's predicament.

Angela Merkel and the World Health Organisation's Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus cut the ribbon at the opening of the WHO Hub For Pandemic And Epidemic Intelligence, 2021




**THE NEED FOR A TRANSNATIONAL APPROACH TO OUTBREAKS HAS NEVER BEEN MORE URGENT**

Before long, any possibility of a clear and honest understanding of the common worldwide conditions that allowed such disasters to happen, not least the biological consequences of environmental degradation, became swallowed up by this default vocabulary of competitive nationalism. Astonishingly, Boris Johnson's UK government was so intent on applying its new norms of Brexit isolation that it withdrew from the common European pandemic early warning information pool. Later, it made the claim that Brexit had allowed it to have the earliest and most successful vaccination programme, passing over the inconvenient fact that, as of July 2022, Britain nonetheless had the highest case and mortality rate of any state in western Europe.

Mercifully, it has not all been a zero-sum game. In late March 2021, 25 world leaders, including Emmanuel Macron, Johnson, Mario Draghi, Angela Merkel, Cyril Ramaphosa, Volodymyr Zelenskiy and the head of the European Council, Charles Michel, as well as the prime ministers of South Korea, Fiji, Thailand, Chile, Senegal and Tunisia – but, depressingly, missing the leaders of the US, Japan, Russia and China – issued a statement explicitly acknowledging the chain linking human and non-human lives and destinies. Invoking the multilateralist idealism of the years following the second world war that sought a reconnected world through the United Nations and agencies like the WHO, they proposed a legally binding international treaty to deal with future pandemics. Such a treaty would embody "an approach that connects the health of humans, animals and our planet".

On 1 September 2021, Merkel and Ghebreyesus opened the WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in Berlin. In a gesture more appropriate for a country fair or the launch of an ocean liner, they cut a ribbon in two places. The ribbon was striped red and white as if simultaneously alerting visitors to peril and bidding them enter anyway. The hub's mission brief says that it is meant to provide global data linkage and the sharing of advanced analytical tools and predictive models, the better to be armed against future outbreaks. "No single institution or nation can do this alone," Ghebreyesus declared. "That's why we have coined the term 'collaborative intelligence'." But there is already data-gathering at the WHO Academy in Lyon and preparations for the storage of infectious material at a secure bio-bank in – where else? – Switzerland. None of this, however, overcomes the immense disparity of resources, for both research and clinical trials, between richer countries and the regions of the world from which new infectious diseases often arise.

This moment in world history is no less fraught for being so depressingly familiar: the immemorial conflict between "is" and "ought"; between short-term power plays and long-term security; between the habits of immediate gratification and the prospering of future generations; between the cult of individualism and the urgencies of common interest; between the drum beat of national tribalism and the bugle call of global peril; between native instinct and hard-earned knowledge. If it is a happy answer you want to the question as to which will prevail, it is probably best not to ask a historian. For history's findings are more often than not tragic, and its boneyard littered with the remains of high-minded internationalist projects. The appeals of idealists fill whole-page declarations in earnest broadsheets and win funds from far-sighted philanthropic foundations. But the plans and the planners are demonised by the tribunes of gut instinct as suspiciously alien, hatched by cosmopolitan elites: the work of foreign bodies ●

*This is an edited extract from Foreign Bodies by Simon Schama, published by Simon & Schuster at £30. To order a copy for £26.40, go to guardianbookshop.com. Delivery charges may apply.*

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Golda Rosheuvel



# TEARS, TRAITORS AND TIARAS

It's been another banner year for TV. Ahead of the Baftas, stars of our favourite shows – from Bridgerton and Bad Sisters to The White Lotus – share their small-screen highlights

*Interviews: Hannah J Davies*
*Portraits: Hollie Fernando*
*Styling: Helen Seamons and Melanie Wilkinson*



Will Sharpe

## 'I thought I was doing a little show about a single mum with eight kids'

### Golda Rosheuvel

*Born in Guyana, Golda Rosheuvel, 53, was raised in England from the age of five. She has appeared in TV series including Luther and plays Queen Charlotte in Netflix's Bridgerton.*

**Had you ever anticipated Bridgerton would become such a hit?**
I had no idea – I thought I was just doing a little show about a single mum with eight kids. But it's about family, and relationships, and we also get to celebrate representation and inclusion, and people have enjoyed that.

**The second series is less racy …**
I think people were disappointed there wasn't more sex, but it was a really good observation of another way of falling in love – will they/won't they.

**What was it like to get into Charlotte's backstory in the prequel?**
Hers is a real-life story about two people from different walks of life who came together [Queen Charlotte was the wife of George III and is thought to have had some African ancestry]. I'm all for passing things on to the next generation, too, so to share this moment with India [Amarteifio, who plays young Charlotte] is a dream come true.

**What show had you gripped last year?**
Sharon Horgan's Bad Sisters. We worked together years ago on BBC's Dead Boss and I've a lot of respect and love for her.

**What would you be doing if you weren't an actor?**
A gardener – I love anything outdoorsy or nature-related – or a tennis player. I'd have loved to play at Wimbledon.

**When did the TV last make you cry?**
It was fantastic to see the connection between humans and animals on Channel 4's [docuseries] The Dog House.

**Who do you watch TV with?**
My partner [playwright Shireen Mula], but I like dark comedy, while she prefers fluffy, bubblegum-y sitcoms.

**Have you ever been starstruck?**
Viola Davis walked past me once! And recently I went up to [US film-maker] Gina Prince-Bythewood, who directed The Woman King. For a moment I was like: "I'll leave her alone" and then I decided: no, I'll go and say thank you and tell her how important it is to have people making projects like hers.

*Bridgerton and Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story are on Netflix.*

## 'When I got the call, part of me was like: have they made a terrible mistake?'

### Will Sharpe

*Raised between London and Tokyo, Will Sharpe, 36, is an actor, writer and director best known for the dark comedy Flowers and the crime thriller Giri/Haji. In 2022, he starred in the second series of the hit HBO drama The White Lotus.*

**What was it like to get the call for The White Lotus?**
Part of me was like: have they made some terrible mistake? But I was a fan of the first season,


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so I was very excited. [White Lotus creator] Mike White was pretty upfront about who would die at the end, but he said he wanted people's suspicions to move around, so I knew there was a level of darkness in him from the outset.

**When we're introduced to Ethan, he seems very reserved ...**
He seems like a meek "nice guy", but as the series goes on he starts to behave in a problematic way. That was interesting for me as a mixed race Asian guy, because often you get pigeonholed in sickly sweet, nerdy, best friend roles or you're a cartoonish villain. But Ethan was morally grey.

**Many people found the ending – and who ended up dead – quite surprising.**
Mike's sort of punk in a way – he always wants to subvert expectations. It was a bold move, and a funny, sad demise for an amazing character.

**What show had you gripped last year?**
The Bear was excellent – I loved it.

**What would you be doing if you weren't an actor?**
When I lived in Tokyo as a kid, I was obsessed with football and wanted to play. But as a teenager I realised that wasn't going to happen.

**What is your TV guilty pleasure?**
I'm not a very good cook myself, but I find MasterChef weirdly relaxing. I really like watching people solve creative problems through the medium of food.

**What do you eat in front of the TV?**
Thai takeaway, a curry, whatever.

**When did the TV last make you cry?**
I was tearing up at the end of [the BBC reality series] The Traitors. There was this fork-in-the-road moment where it looked like one contestant was going to win, then he was thrown under the bus by somebody else. I thought he was going to be like: "I was so close!" But he was a gracious loser.

**Have you ever been starstruck?**
A long time ago, my friend and I shot a pilot for a TV series. They were friendly with Joan Collins, so she agreed to be in this very low-budget teaser that we were filming on a digital SLR camera. She's such a formidable presence that I wasn't sure what to say to her!

*The White Lotus is available via Sky/Now.*



Sharon Horgan

## 'I saw my daughters watching Married at First Sight ... then suddenly I was 23 episodes in'

### Sharon Horgan

*Born in London, Sharon Horgan, 52, grew up in Ireland. She is an actor, comic, writer, director and producer who has appeared in multiple films and is known for series including Pulling, Catastrophe, Motherland and Divorce. In 2022, the first series of her show Bad Sisters aired on Apple TV+ .*

**Bad Sisters was a darker show than people expect from you. How was it to write, develop and act in it?**
A challenge. I was all set to get back into safe waters – half-hour examinations of relationships or families or being a woman of a certain age – then Apple brought me the Belgian thriller Clan. I've balked at adapting stuff before, but I watched the first episode and felt it was too good a story not to take on.

**It's a dark show, with death and domestic violence at its core, but it manages to be warm, too.**
It is, and there is visual and physical comedy to it. The tricky thing was never making light of the subject and examining it in the best possible way. You feel a responsibility when you're telling stories like that.

**There's another series on the way – was that always the plan?**
It was initially a limited series, but as we were shooting it, we saw how well the sisters worked together, their chemistry ... Is it true I'm writing it in bed? Yes, but not under the covers. I'm on top of them. Upright.

**What is your TV guilty pleasure?**
Married at First Sight UK. I see my daughters watching something, lean over, and suddenly I'm 23 episodes in.

**When did the TV last make you cry?**
The Motherland 2022 Christmas special (I shouldn't say that, but there are so many people involved, it doesn't feel like "my" show). It's that feeling of grief being complicated because it's mixed up with love and regret. I love making shows that make you laugh and cry.

**Who do you watch TV with?**
My daughters. I don't love watching on my own – I need a shared experience.

**Have you ever been starstruck?**
Yes, most recently by Tina Fey, who has kindly agreed to be in one of my shows. She's my comedy heroine.

*Bad Sisters is on Apple TV+.*

PREVIOUS PAGES, LEFT: SCHIAPARELLI SHIRT DRESS AND EARRINGS; COMPLETEDWORKS AND BY PARIAH RINGS. RIGHT: SIMONE ROCHA SHIRT; MAISON MARGIELA JACKET, FROM MYTHERESA.COM. THIS PAGE: JOHANNA ORTIZ DRESS, FROM MYTHERESA.COM

## 'I know I really like a series when I don't fall asleep'

### Ellie Simmonds

*Record-breaking Paralympian Ellie Simmonds, 28, retired from swimming in 2021 and in 2022 competed in the BBC's Strictly Come Dancing.*

**Despite retiring from swimming, you were on the TV a lot in 2022 …**
Yes – with Strictly and covering the Commonwealth Games for the BBC, and making the documentary A World Without Dwarfism?, I couldn't have asked for a better year.

**How was it, being asked to do Strictly?**
I've watched it for years and love it, so to get the opportunity to be part of it and learn a new skill was so good. I was way out of my comfort zone – not just the dances but the hair, makeup and costumes – but the whole team make you feel so welcome. I did seven weeks on the show, then went on tour.

**As the first Strictly contestant with dwarfism, how important was it for you to represent other people?**
It was a huge honour – a chance to raise awareness, to grow in confidence and learn more about myself.

**Will we see you on TV again soon?**
I'm making a new documentary with ITV about adoption and disability. It's been another learning curve for me and I've met some incredible people.

**What show had you gripped last year?**
The Handmaid's Tale. I know I really like a series when I don't fall asleep.

**Who is the most famous person in your phone contacts?**
Probably Craig Revel Horwood – or Anton Du Beke.

*Strictly Come Dancing is on BBC iPlayer.*



Ellie Simmonds

## 'I got really starstruck at the Oscars when I saw Lizo from Newsround'

### Joe Lycett

*A standup comedian since 2009, Joe Lycett, 34, has fronted TV series including the consumer-focused Joe Lycett's Got Your Back and the chatshow Late Night Lycett for Channel 4. He is also known for his viral activism and for his 2022 World Cup protest against anti-LGBTQ+ laws in Qatar.*

**Last year you memorably described yourself as "very rightwing" [during an interview on Laura Kuenssberg's BBC show] – is that still the case?**
Yes, I'm probably more rightwing than I was when I said it – it gets very addictive. Essentially, you can do and say whatever you want because of freedom of speech. Weirdly, I could say everything I wanted to say *before* I was rightwing as well. Hmmm …

**What show had you gripped last year?**
The Traitors, which showed real people of all ages and backgrounds. I think Gogglebox shows us the British public love to see themselves on TV.

**Have you ever been mistaken for anybody else?**
James Acaster, and he has people mistake him for me. On my last tour I leaned into it and managed to convince my agent – who was not happy about it – that I should replace the image on my tube posters with James's face, which I think might be one of the funniest things I've done.

**Which TV show can't you wait to see return to our screens?**
I've heard Deal Or No Deal is coming back – it's an all-time favourite. I'm a bit annoyed they didn't ask me to host it.

**What do you eat in front of the TV?**
I've started buying frozen parathas from Asda. They're just so much nicer than any other bread; I'll even have them with hummus.

**Have you ever been starstruck?**
I got really starstruck at the Oscars when I saw Lizo from Newsround. I love a newsreader, too – when you see them in real life it's like peeking into the teachers' staffroom.

*Late Night Lycett is available on All 4.*

## 'I've graduated to a level of TV-making where people are listening to me'

### Louis Theroux (overleaf)

*A journalist and documentary-maker, Louis Theroux, 52, is best known for his acclaimed series including Weird Weekends, When Louis Met … and last year, for the BBC, Forbidden America and Louis Theroux Interviews …*

**You got into some deep topics, from religion to grief, in your series. What were the biggest surprises for you?**
There were lots. With Stormzy, for example, I was aware of his intelligence and thoughtfulness, but he's not someone who does a lot of publicity. He gave me the huge privilege of opening up about his dad, which felt very intimate. Then we also see this slightly nerdy version you wouldn't

THIS PAGE: RIVER ISLAND DRESS; COMPLETEDWORKS EARRINGS. OPPOSITE: CHARLES JEFFREY LOVERBOY COAT; ISSEY MIYAKE TOP; STORY MFG TROUSERS; CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN BOOTS


Joe Lycett

necessarily know existed. He doesn't get to rap about Wordle!

**Now you have your own production company, do you feel you have more creative control over your output?**

I've never felt I lacked creative control, but I am enjoying being involved in things I'm not presenting. I was part of the team that came up with [the BBC's drama mini-series] Gods of Snooker, as well as Alice Levine's Sex Actually on Channel 4. I feel I've graduated to a level of TV-making where people are listening to me because they think I've got something of value to contribute. Which might make me sound a little weird and insecure, but there you are.

**You also had a hit on TikTok last year [with the Duke & Jones song Jiggle Jiggle, based on a snippet from the YouTube series Chicken Shop Date].**

**What was your relationship to viral content prior to that?**

I became conscious that TikTok was becoming bigger in lockdown, and when my son asked if I wanted to hear a sea shanty I realised something quite random can suddenly take off there. Even so, it was no preparation for a rap fragment from 20 years ago [originally from Weird Weekends] catching on.

**What show had you gripped last year?**

Nathan Fielder's [HBO comedy/documentary] The Rehearsal was extraordinary, with its pranksterism, self-reflection and self-flagellation.

**What is your TV guilty pleasure?**

Match of the Day – guilty because it's late on a Saturday, when I should go to bed as my eight-year-old gets up early.

*Forbidden America and Louis Theroux Interviews … are on iPlayer.*




## 'I don't want to be remembered as the guy who snorted dog food-flavoured ice-cream on national TV'

### Munya Chawawa

*Born in Derby and raised in Zimbabwe, Munya Chawawa, 30, is a comedian and actor who has gained acclaim for his online parodies and portrayal of spoof drill rapper Unknown P. Last year he appeared in TV projects ranging from Taskmaster to the Channel 4 comedy special Prince Andrew: The Musical.*

**You're very quick with your parodies. What's your secret?**

I would say I had cloned myself, but there's not enough hair in the world to recreate my eyebrows. The speed comes down to starting my career as a researcher on a TV show with a very tight turnaround. That said, I like to let stories marinate a bit these days – you can put tuna in sauce for five minutes, but it's not gonna taste as good as if you left it in there for a day.

**How have you found your transition from online fame to television?**

It feels really good. It's great to be on TV with people I grew up watching, like David Mitchell and Lee Mack. At one point I was going through a breakup and all I did was watch Would I Lie to You?, which was ironic because that's what I was asking my ex. Portraying the king of England was also great. I enjoyed people's shock at seeing that not only had they cast a mixed race person, but also someone who looked nothing like him.

**How did you find Taskmaster?**

I've got an inner adventurer – in England there's health and safety, but in Zimbabwe I'd be bungee jumping out of trees – so a show in which the whole point is to get stuck in and have a laugh was perfect for me. That said, a low point was identifying ice-cream flavours by taste. I was on a low-sugar diet so I smelled them instead – I don't want to be remembered as the guy who snorted dog food-flavoured ice-cream on national TV.

**What show had you gripped last year?**

The Bear. I used to work in a restaurant, so I know all about the pressure of not dropping a pomegranate salad. I also watched a show on Channel 4 where you could tweak your body according to strangers' comments [Send Nudes: Body SOS]. I found myself thinking: "What would I look like with a Brazilian butt lift?"

**Who would play you in the TV show of your life?**

I feel like if we could get Richard Ayoade to do a bit more R&B gyrating, he would be a really good match.

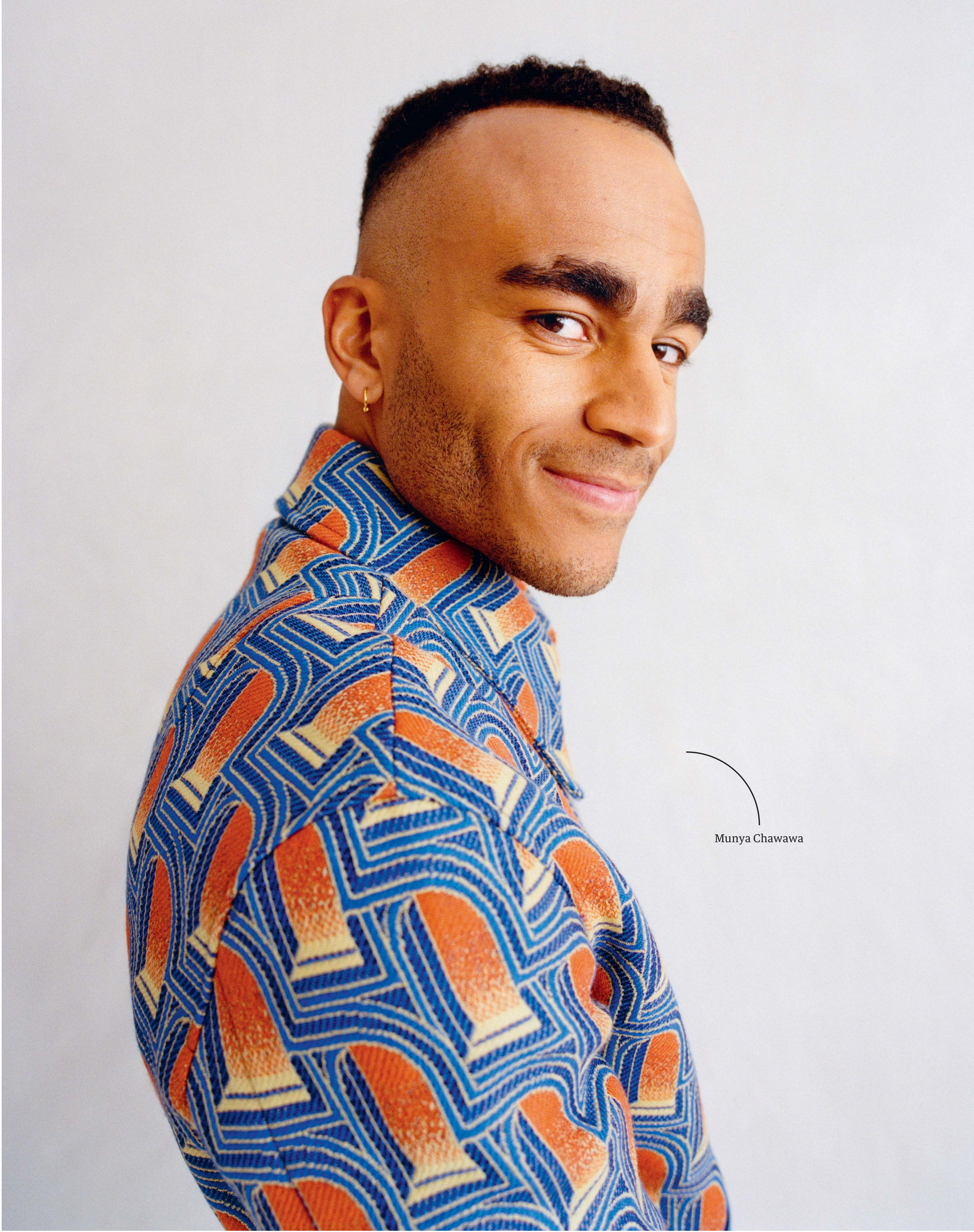
**What recent news story would you turn into a TV drama?**

The story of the man who stole 200,000 Creme Eggs. I think that could be an enthralling crime series ●

*Taskmaster and Prince Andrew: The Musical are on All 4.*

*The Bafta television awards with P&O Cruises are on BBC One tomorrow.*

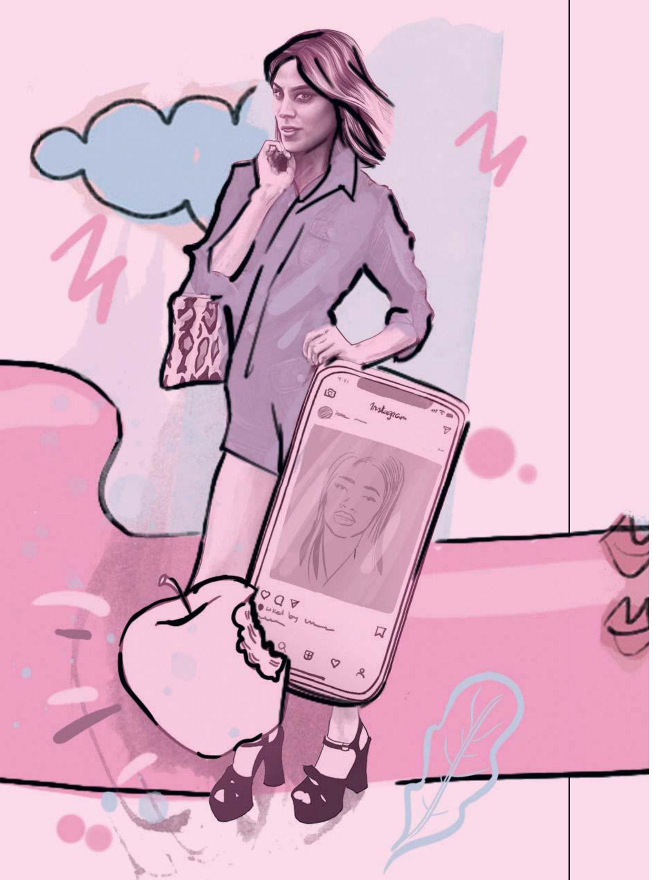
THIS PAGE: DRIES VAN NOTEN SHIRT, FROM SELFRIDGES.COM; RICHARD JAMES SUIT. OPPOSITE: CASABLANCA PARIS JACKET. HAIR: MIFFY GOKNIL AND AMY LYNCH AT HARI'S USING R+CO. MAKEUP: ANNA LUMSDEN, CARLA FRANCESCA AND FRANKIE BENNETT AT MAKEUP JUNKIES USING RARE BEAUTY. FASHION ASSISTANT: ROZ DONOGHUE. LOCATION: SEA CONTAINERS LONDON



Munya Chawawa



# ‘MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE INTERNET IS AN INFIDELITY’




*Harriet Gibsone* has spent a lifetime poring over the intimate details of strangers’ and celebrities’ lives via social media. Is it time for her to stop being an ‘inquisitive creep’?

IT TAKES TWO WEEKS to fall in love with my new neighbour, Tanya. I am nine and she is three years my senior. Tanya is a wildly creative and prodigal musician; I watch her do her scales and exam pieces on the clarinet, flute and piano most nights. She plays like a professional tap dancer and part-time sniper – with poise, urgent precision and intensity, the tips of her soft strawberry-blond hair whipping with vigour in the final throes of a particularly fraught arpeggio. When her sad, vast rabbit begins to urinate on the freshly installed carpet of her bedroom floor one Saturday afternoon, my kneejerk reaction is to pick up the pet with one hand and hold my dress out like a net with the other. I am grateful that she seeks my company and try to prove it at any cost – often at the expense of my gingham school uniform.

While we possess a mutual passion for Sylvanian Families, Jagged Little Pill and watching Ricki Lake, our relationship is crystallised by the obsessive, illicit hobby we share. Most weekends and some afternoons after school, we meet on the sandpaper roof of her rotting wooden playhouse, where we whittle sticks or lick the sourness off Irn-Bru bars while staring intently into the front room of the elderly couple who live over the fence. Our view partially obscured by spindly trees, we study them for hours, rejoicing whenever we are rewarded with the smallest gesture – a sneeze, or a lean in for the remote.

It is a connection to a very adult world, an exercise in anthropology. To follow the couple’s every move, even though they aren’t the demographic we are typically interested in, is mesmerising. It is an ambient, almost meditative experience that creates a silent sense of camaraderie between us.

As Tanya enters her teens, she begins to spend more time with girls her own age, and our days observing elderly people are now over. I would climb to the top of a tree in my garden and look at her as she lay on the grass with her new friend Donna, trading gossip and makeup, two luxury goods I am still too young to acquire. I am hooked on sneaky observation, only unlike in the playhouse days I return from the excursion racked with wistfulness rather than soothed. Viewing them from the tree, sprawled on their backs, making daisy chains and swapping shag bands and laughing in the unhinged way that only teenagers can, I believe it is only through surveying them that I might learn how to be a worthier friend, a savvier lady and a better person in the process.

At this point you might hastily, if understandably, assume I am some form of voyeur. But that’s a label that doesn’t sit right with me: my personal experience of a “voyeur” is a puce-faced man with the nickname Dave the Dagger rustling in the bushes of an alleyway next to my primary school, not a lachrymose tween sucking the chlorine water from her wet ponytail after a swimming lesson. Instead, I prefer “inquisitive creep”. A creep with a desire for the clues that connect us all. Ones that reassure me that I am fine, normal, that we are all jettisoned together.

Eventually my preoccupations with other people’s lives would expand to include those with a public profile, too – people on TV, in films, musicians and, in later years, influencers. I’d come to discover this has a name: parasocial relationships, the dynamic where a “normal” person feels strongly towards a famous person. The term originated in 1956 to refer to the relationship between viewers and television personalities, and has become more widespread over the past decade due to fanatical “Stan” culture and the superficial notion that we have 24-hour access to the lives of public figures via social media and reality shows.

There’s a troubling delusion that comes with parasocial relationships – a sense that as fans or casual followers we are entitled to know everything; or that we already do via rigorous detail gathering and FBI levels of digital sleuthing. Some devolve into trolls to defend their beloved celebrity icons at any cost, while others are so dedicated to uncovering the truth, to making the object of their lust their entire identity, that they spend their spare time making memes and conspiracy videos about potential inter-band love affairs and rifts.

Mine, however, is a private, meaningful, near spiritual kind of reverence that I return to again and again, particularly in times of need. It can be something in the way the celebrity sings, or speaks, or the way their fringe falls or top lip curls, that then leads me to believe we are soulmates. A tiny fragment of my internal world feels acknowledged by whatever art they’re making, and in seeing myself reflected back in a big room or on a stage I am lifted from the existential loneliness that generic human existence brings. Other times, admittedly, they’re just really hot and I want to bang them.

These people, these fixations and fantasies, have defined my life. I have a habit of getting lost for days, months, years in these unrequited trysts – a devotion that is fundamental to my navigation of life. Just like hiding up a tree, I have used the internet to observe and escape when reality has become either too tedious or too painful, in order to cultivate some form of connection with another person, even if it is an artificial one played out from within the safety of my own mind.

It’s an experience that has been twisted and magnificent, one that has provided sweet relief and also demonstrated the



*Portraits: Kate Peters | Illustration: Cristina Polop*



clear capacity to destroy me completely. But, first, let me bring you up to speed.

ALEXA CHUNG ONCE SAID on a fashion podcast: "If you study an image for long enough, you take on those attributes by osmosis." With that in mind, I've been staring at a photo of her in a preppy smock dress off and on for two hours today – on the bus, in the loo, then peering at it on Google in my pocket like a lucky stone. In the best possible way, she looks like a marzipan baby-doll triangle princess. When I try on my interpretation of the outfit, all I see is a shapeless satin sack that grips to every lump and crevice on my body, like a tea towel draped over a bowl of grapes.

I was 19 and in the market for a new idol when I first saw her bounce on screen with Popworld co-star Alex Zane in the mid-00s. Within months her reign as one of the last true "It" girls had begun – a force of style and personality that would later catapult her to America, launch her clothing brand and create the type of hype and mystique normally preserved by pop stars, or a natural deodorant that actually works.

I scrutinised every image of Alexa Chung uploaded to the internet. I followed her progress like a music fan would their favourite band; each new photo a new song, a new season, the mood of the moment. She gives a little but never enough: I wanted to know if she drinks cow's milk. What form of contraceptive she uses. How her endometriosis has affected her life and if she has a good relationship with her mother. If she considers the success of modern influencers shallow, and if she's ever considered Botox.

It is hard to imagine her acting timidly – her voice lost to the loud chatter of a party as she asks a guest if their journey was OK, once, twice, three times, until they finally hear it, and answer back dispassionately. When she talks, everyone listens. Because as well as being funny and clever – the sort of person who's inexplicably good at poker, darts and bowling, and has literary quotes and references appropriate for every occasion – Alexa has been blessed with extraordinary beauty.

Clothes fit her so well, whereas they – dungarees – so often feel as if they are wearing me. Preppy, shabby, cool, she shapeshifts from poised street style to reluctant A-lister; dishevelled bedhead to silky Hollywood tresses; battered Converse to sexy Prada boots, PVC and Peter Pan collars. She's at her zenith on the go and off-guard – with a coffee or cigarette, the wind in her hair as she strides through the city to a ballet class; lanky limbs, short shorts and high-quality faded T-shirts that look like they're made of fine lamb's wool. She keeps things simple underneath: I once heard her say that she wears sensible white pants. This information entered my cerebral cortex, nudged out the file marked How to Convert a Decimal, and has stuck around ever since. So now I do, too, because Alexa understands that more is less – as long as you've also done barre every day for two months and have a body as smooth as a balloon animal.

I don't know what dark arts Alexa learned at school, but she successfully duped me into thinking this level of rich eclecticism and sophistication is obtainable. I kept buying new clothes, expecting them to catapult me into another tier of stylishness, and cannot come to terms with the fact there are insurmountable physical differences between us. God bless me and the patent pumps and the seersucker midi dresses that I've purchased over the years, praying they might make me as whip-smart and charming as her.

Before Alexa came into my life and really ignited my ambition, I had already dipped my toes into the cut-throat world of showbiz. Aged nine, I auditioned for the lead role in my primary school's Victorian Music Hall and got it – wowing crowds as the former silent shy girl who could now sing My Fair Lady's Wouldn't It Be Loverly? with the cockney panache of Hepburn in her pomp.

## IMAGINED SCENARIOS OF ME AND CHRIS MARTIN TOGETHER HAVE DRAGGED ME THROUGH THE DRABBEST AFTERNOONS

And, like Alexa, I'd dabbled in modelling back in my late teens. My debut shoot took place for the Bournemouth student magazine: the theme was "autumn" and my housemate Becki did my hair and makeup; we kept it low-key with smokey eyes and a choppy straightened bob. I laughed my head off in a tweed jacket by a tree and was over the moon with the images. So much so, I emailed the best few to a modelling agent in London, who never replied.

The second opportunity promised a more mainstream audience: a local culture and listings magazine called Big in Bournemouth. I'd been doing work experience there for two weeks and volunteered to step in on a shoot when the model couldn't make it. The editor sent me to a shopping centre to get my makeup done at the Bobbi Brown counter. I told the makeup artist I wanted a "Sophie Ellis-Bextor, minimal look", to which the young man said, "Sure", before smearing thick layers of orange gunk on to my white skin. When I stepped on to the set, I caught the editor recoiling subtly and the room went quiet for long enough for me to overhear the words "What have they done to her face?"

After 15 years of my one-sided rivalry with Alexa – involving a tragic stab at TV presenting and an onstage panel experience that I failed at spectacularly because I was preoccupied by what top I was going to wear rather than what I was going to talk about – I decided, for the sake of my own sanity, to block Alexa on Instagram.

Now I am relieved of her rarefied updates every day from the Met Gala red carpet or with a bouquet of tulips at a busy Sunday market. This block is a bleak and reluctant acceptance that I do not have the effortlessness that allows for a fluid experience of life. To be loved and earn a living for smiling is not my fate.

This liberation from my online fixation would be emancipating were it not for the algorithms offering me a string of other Parisian-themed babes to dodge during my mid-morning social media slump. The other issue is that I transferred all my obsession for her on to her ex, Alex Turner, and his new partners.

Down my Alex Turner rabbit hole I discovered gossip websites lavishing in his new cartoonish LA rockstar lifestyle: papped at airports with a pristine actor-cum-influencer type with long valley-girl hair, his new girlfriend Arielle. It bruises me *and* fills me with a dark glee, as I'm reminded of a passage from Alexa's debut book, It: "Boys say they don't mind how you get your hair done," she writes. "But then they leave you for someone with really great standard girl hair and the next thing you know you're alone with a masculine crop crying into your granola."

But I've seen Alexa's hair. I've studied the shots. There's not one in which she has a masculine crop – unless she's referring to a brief Mick Jagger shaggy bob, which doesn't really count because she looked like a rock star. But herein lies the key to Alexa's popularity beyond celestial looks: self-deprecation.

Hoodwinking her audience into thinking she is flawed and chaotic, just as susceptible to heartache and humiliation as the rest of us. Using her alleged inadequacies to puncture the veneer of superiority and manipulate the public into investing in her. It's a classic trait of a good old-fashioned people-pleaser, fearful of the displeasure of others, willing to throw oneself under the bus in a plea for connection, approval and love.

Maybe we have more in common than I thought.

AS LIFE HAS EVOLVED, there has been a constant stream of objects of lust and intrigue, each of which has warped my interior world during a crisis. Take puppy-dog stadium pop-god Chris Martin. The Coldplay frontman has enjoyed a 20-year residency in the front of my brain. Imagined scenarios of us together on Christmas Day or schmoozing side by side at a celebrity shindig have dragged me through the drabbest afternoons.

Then there was a teen on TikTok whose lifestyle and hair I found so beguiling that I decided to get a mullet myself during lockdown, with chilling results. There was also a man at a bus stop, who I became convinced I knew, and would smile at often. After overhearing three words of a conversation and inspecting his clothing choices intensely for a year, I managed to unearth his Facebook profile and realised he was a total stranger, which makes sense now because he did always look frightened when I smiled. Motherhood has not spared me the indecency of parasocial fixations, however. If anything they have got worse.

CHEEKS PINK WITH A POST-ORGASMIC flush, her hair damp and tangled, the woman in the small square photograph is surrendering to an expression of total euphoria. In her arms is a tiny creature, so new and unformed it is still practically an internal organ turned external. It's a special baby. A healthy, happy baby. It's Deliciously Ella's baby.

It is six months before I give birth and my interest in the wellbeing influencer's Instagram has started to become more pronounced. Ella had a positive birth experience, one of spirituality and inevitability, and obviously I'd love the same: a gentle evacuation before breastfeeding into oblivion. Unfortunately, our schedule is already deviating from Ella's: the NHS categorises ours as a high-risk pregnancy and I relish telling friends and colleagues about what a delicate little angel I am.

A few months pass and, at my 28-week appointment my midwife generously asks about a birthing plan, and we are encouraged to draw up a list of requirements to ensure tranquillity and focus. Like a projector showing a Glyndebourne live stream and access to a qualified reiki instructor, for example. But not me. Not little old low-maintenance, delicate angel me. "Just get the baby out of me alive!" I jest, nervously, and she looks relieved.

Things are getting more dictatorial in the kitchen, however, as I've recently downloaded the Deliciously Ella app. It's filled with plant-based recipes: I make her nut butter, sweet potato and quinoa salad, and drink big cups of thick purple and green smoothies filled with hemp, chia and other supplements from the supermarket that look and taste like dust from a carpenter's workshop and cost £12. Subscribing to someone else's way of life amid a time of such health-based scrutiny feels like an easier option than relying on my own instincts, however, so I plough ahead.

For the next few months, she is my secret guru. This steady, nurturing approach is essential for the baby's growth, but it's unfamiliar to me. After many years of using food as some form of punishment, restricting it, removing it from my body, and having little faith in my ability to look after myself, or that my body even works in the way it should, I am depending on Ella to teach us both how to survive.

During my first trimester, Ella makes her Instagram inbox open to her one million followers. I immediately DM her to ask if it's OK that I am eating so many Hula Hoops. A few days later she has congratulated me and says to relax, to listen to my body, and adds four kisses at the end.

KATE PETERS/THE GUARDIAN. HAIR AND MAKEUP: DANI RICHARDSON. TOP: PAVEMENT




I am touched by her speedy, warm and honest response but a bit perturbed as to why I sent the message in the first place. Days before, I'd listened to an episode of her podcast in which she reassured listeners that it's fine to feed your body whatever it asks for in the first trimester, and that she just ate potatoes. So why did I send it? I then vow to keep her at arm's length, painfully aware that I'm never more than one G&T-in-a-can away from becoming the type of person who writes "Well done hun, you're stronger than you'll ever know" underneath a post from a former Towie cast member whose miniature schnauzer has just been diagnosed with diabetes.

Ella speaks a lot on social media and on her podcasts about the benefits of hypnobirthing: a method of pain management that involves mindful breathing and visualisations, and a woman I work with claims her baby slipped out like a bar of soap thanks to breathwork alone. I Google local classes and sign up for the nearest session.

AFTER AN EXTREMELY TRAUMATIC birth in which every step is aided by a penetrative arm or metal instrument, cranking my insides open, willing him to leave me, my baby is brought out limp and lifeless and resuscitated before I haemorrhage and am sent to surgery with tears. The golden hour doesn't happen, the milk doesn't come, no meditation would have curbed the violence of the events in the hospital ward.

In the weeks that follow, my jealousy for Ella becomes all-encompassing. My brain is filled with a whiney new voice, like a child who feels entitled to a different dinner. I am weaving a sorry narrative: it's so unfair my baby's conception was fraught and medical, while Ella conceived while making sweat-free love on pristine sheets as Chilled Out Flute Compilation #7 played in the background, probably. From what I can tell from her social media output, her child's birth was essentially a slightly intense poo in a paddling pool, while ours was murderous.

And yet I took care of my son during pregnancy just as she told me to; I did gentle yoga, meditation and ate whatever my body asked for, the good and the bad. We never had the bliss or rapture of that photo and I don't think I'll ever catch up, especially as Ella has a nanny (shout out to Janet).

It's not her fault that this is her life. She is just trying to promote positive birth stories so others aren't afraid. But maybe they should be frightened? Women and babies still die in birth, and it's not because they've not meditated hard enough; it's because it's seismic and unpredictable. And once the pain and blood of birth have finished, you are filled with psychological savagery on the other side. The first few days of motherhood are brutal. The level of high-functioning performance required is unparalleled. It's like stumbling on stage at the start of the Oscars, your body bloodied and broken from a plane crash, and you're handed a mic and told you're hosting the whole gig, but if the jokes aren't good enough, the audience dies.

Most days after my son is born I find myself in a transient state, slipping through extreme boredom and acute stress. Social media has stepped in, taking control in the worst possible way. It is acting the role of a best friend who gets you blackout drunk in a terrible club when you're grieving the loss of a loved one. A temporary distraction – an artificial sensation of intimacy and community when really it is toxifying and exhausting. Nevertheless, I check it mindlessly, slack-jawed, closing then immediately opening the Instagram app without recognition of the mind-rotting absurdity of it all.

My friend Debbie messages to ask what I've been up to.

"Looking at yellow poo and envying a wellbeing influencer?" I type, sending her a link to Ella's rigorous morning routine, which begins with meditation and an alarm clock at 5.45am.

"Jesus, can you imagine how awful it must be to have to post that shit every day?"

Debbie has a point. I may be full of bitterness, but at least I am free of all online duties. There is no following waiting for me. My career doesn't depend on the regularity of my online existence. The day after leaving hospital, Ella posted a photo of some avocado toast and roasted sweet potatoes. Five days later she was "recipe testing" falafels for her next book. A month after her baby was born she released an episode of her podcast and posted about having a "busy day at work". Meanwhile, I can't remember how much formula to put in the baby's bottle. My husband, Mark, has stuck a Post-it note on our fridge so I don't forget (four scoops). If anything, Ella must be more afraid than I am. Of losing who she is, her career, her wealth, her reputation. The fury turns into sympathy; so long as I don't think about the nanny.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOLD that most people are too inward-looking to judge anyone else's actions: that nobody out there is at home reflecting on the way you tripped into the room or opened the door with your elbow because they're busy thinking about the way they pronounced hyperbole in a meeting three years ago. The tragic truth is that I am always thinking about someone else. Everyone who has a phone with social media is doing this – staring at others, mind whirring as we categorise them, judge them, marvel or scathe. It's definitely tiring, but is it acceptable? To view other people as I'd so hate to be viewed myself – ranking everyone on their beauty and surface-level achievements? Assuming so much about someone's childhood and present relationship status based on the time of night they've posted, and the way in which they've used a comma?

I've come to realise my relationship with the internet is an infidelity: a remorseless, ongoing affair with the fringes of humanity, while I am in a stable relationship with all of my friends and relatives. I find it impossible to believe that I will have the strength to give up this habit for ever. But at least now there is a growing awareness of my fortune, and of the dangers of wasted time.

Something has awakened in me, the emergence of a surlier version of myself, someone more weary in the face of such temptations. This is the voice of my longsuffering, baseline soul, and it is assuring me of some facts.

She says that it is all right to sometimes feast on the contemporary wonders of global connectedness, as long as it is in small doses, and if I've slept for eight hours and have been outside for a walk.

She says that it's natural to feel jealous and obsessive, when so much of being a woman is mandatory social voyeurism, where you are forced to absorb a revolving billboard of other tantalising lifestyles pioneered by better girls that could be you if you work hard enough, collect all the right tokens and stop eating crisps.

This is not a makeover or rebrand but a new perspective, one that I'm going to hold on to as I stand on the precipice of the rest of it all, the rest of life, the hard bit – which brings with it a body that will rebel, a mind that will slacken, and loved ones who will no longer be around. It is scary, but also affirming. The sun is getting hotter, the end may be in sight, but I want to feel every moment of it ●

*This is an edited extract from Is This OK? by Harriet Gibsone, published on 25 May by Pan Macmillan at £16.99. To buy a copy for £14.95 go to guardian bookshop.com*




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# CULTURE

## REMADE IN AMERICA



*The US can't stop adapting British sitcoms – but why are so few of them any good?*



# The CBS version of the BBC sitcom Ghosts is one of the biggest shows on American TV. But US remakes more often than not go south. Armando Iannucci and other creators share their horror stories

*Words: Daniel Dylan Wray*

GHOSTS



"IT WAS TRULY AWFUL from start to finish," says Armando Iannucci, recalling the painful process around the US remake of his satirical comedy The Thick of It back in 2007. "The pilot was so boring. There was no swearing, no improv … everything The Thick of It had, it didn't have. I played it for the cast and people just started wandering off. It couldn't even hold our attention."

On paper, the US version had looked juicy. Mitch Hurwitz, creator of Arrested Development, was producing, with Christoper Guest of Spinal Tap fame directing. But the BBC sold the show to ABC and the culture of US network television – compared with cable or, latterly, streaming, where there's more freedom around language and content – proved suffocating for Iannucci. "Everything is micromanaged," he says. "I was a tiny cog in a machine of people all named vice-president of something. I went to one meeting where they were literally discussing the colour ties the cast should be wearing. There were 20 people in the room, including the network president. It was bizarre."

Iannucci is just one beneficiary – or perhaps victim – of a seemingly endless appetite by US TV to remake UK comedies. A fifth attempt to remake Peep Show has been greenlit by the FX network, with Minnie Driver and Amandla Jahava cast as the gender-swapped leads; a US revamp of Motherland is going into production with Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt's Ellie Kemper lined up to star; and Amazon Freevee has ordered 10 episodes of Friday Night Dinner, starring the YouTuber Daniel Thrasher and Julia Louis-Dreyfus's son Henry Hall as squabbling brothers Jonny and Adam Goodman.

This sudden spate of adaptations seems curious given that, by and large, US remakes of UK shows tend to be a bit of a disaster. "The people that made it completely, utterly misread what the original was about," said Simon Pegg said of the 2008 remake of Spaced that was axed after a pilot that Pegg described as "painful to watch". Richard Ayoade starred in the remake of The IT Crowd in 2007 but that never made it past pilot. Nor did Absolutely Fabulous or Dad's Army or The Vicar of Dibley. If you dislike laughing and relish the feeling of wasting your life, you can watch the first Peep Show attempt – a 2005 pilot starring The Big Bang Theory's Johnny Galecki – on YouTube.

Those that do make it past a pilot rarely last. Remakes of Skins, Gavin & Stacey and Teachers were all binned after one season. Even big-shot director Taika Waititi couldn't rescue The Inbetweeners, which also died after one season. Turns out replacing crass, foul-mouthed British teenagers cluelessly navigating adolescence with wholesome young men who don't drink or swear doesn't have the same lols. The path from UK to US has been so well-trodden – and so fraught with risk – that there has even been a sitcom about the process: Episodes, starring Stephen Mangan and Tamsin Greig as British writers struggling to adapt their Brit-com for American TV.

So why the endless remakes? Well, a huge part of that answer is simply: The Office. A vast number of these remakes have followed the 2005 workplace reboot, which has become a benchmark for adaptations after running for nine seasons and more than 200 episodes. "The Office is like a unicorn, it's so rare," the writer and co-creator of a hugely successful British comedy show tells me. He has asked to remain anonymous because he works in TV in LA and doesn't want to annoy certain people, but his show was cancelled after one series and deemed a disaster. "It's still heartbreaking," he says. "You need a good showrunner who cares, like Greg Daniels did with the [US] Office, but ours was a lazy dickhead. I genuinely thought: it'll go out, nobody will give a shit and I'll never have to speak about it again, but it's the thing I get asked about the most."

On a very basic level, the US creates a hell of a lot of TV. In 2022 it produced 599 original scripted English-language series. So it's constantly hungry for content, be that original series or remakes. "A lot of people get paid a lot of money to write scripts that never go beyond scripts," says the anonymous writer. "I've forgotten entire scripts that I've written."

But why do so few remakes work? "So many things can go wrong," says Jenny Bicks, writer and producer of Sex and the City, who recently developed Welcome to Flatch, based on Charlie and Daisy May Cooper's This Country. "More things can go wrong than right. Casting and tone are key. The belief about comedy here in the US is: faster is funnier, bigger jokes and more pratfalls. That's not what This Country was. We had to let it live in these quiet moments and have silences." Given the show was renewed for a second season, it is already a relative success.

The deluge of remakes is "testament to the British creative community", says Angie Stephenson, senior

BBC/MONUMENTAL TELEVISION; BBC/CBS BROADCASTING INC

SKINS



THE OFFICE





## ‘A failed remake is a very public failure. More people are aware when it goes south’

vice-president of scripted development for BBC Studios, who has developed sitcoms such as Miranda and Ghosts as well as This Country, for the US. She says the Ghosts remake has become “the biggest hit comedy on a broadcast network”.

But such successes are rare. Iannucci says he is “suspicious” of the need to do remakes at all, “because nowadays you can access the original even if it’s not made in your country”.

Due to the glut of TV being made and shown in the US, UK originals don’t always blow up in the gargantuan US market, leaving potential for a remake – with a freshly allocated promo budget – to do that job. The anonymous writer likens the process to the oil business, with the UK a ripe site for drilling and extraction. “It’s like, let’s tap that one, then move on to the next one,” he says. “It’s business and you realise you’re disposable and that thing that you’ve crafted isn’t actually that important to them because it’s just about: is it a money producer or not?”

A common narrative around US comedy versus UK is the need to soften things up and to lean into sentimentality, so perhaps a harsher and more piss-taking British bite gets lost in translation. Men Behaving Badly creator Simon Nye, whose show got remade back in 1996, says “If there’s one thing they do wrong [when remaking UK shows], they panic and the fallback is always sentiment.” However, he points out that it is not universal. “Only Fools and Horses is far more sentimental than Seinfeld.” Similarly, Iannucci’s template for comedy gold is the brilliant spoof US talkshow sitcom The Larry Sanders Show, a series loaded with narcissistic egomaniacs. “All the characters are deeply flawed,” he says. “So sentimentality has not been my experience.”

There are plenty of other examples to counter the sentiment narrative, from the deeply unaffectionate It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia to South Park’s brutality or Curb Your Enthusiasm’s obsession with pettiness and neuroses. Still, our anonymous writer’s experience was soured by US sentiment. “Our show had a voiceover and on the remake it was really bad,” he says. “We said: don’t make it sincere, it’s not The Wonder Years. But then there’s talk about love and learning. I said, ‘If I can rewrite these voiceovers I can make it 40% funnier,’ but they said no.”

Taking a show that has a very distinctive voice, often written by a single person or duo, and translating that to a broad format created in a writers’ room with sometimes tens of people, can be an additional hurdle. As can the need to expand the size of the shows in the US. While Ghosts may be a success, it has had to navigate taking something that is six episodes per series in the UK into one that runs 22 in the US. Not all shows can survive such a vast stretching out. “The key to sitcoms is simplicity,” says Nye. “And with the American format, they’ve got so many plots because they order so many episodes.”

However, perhaps the main problem is simply that failure is pretty much inescapable in US TV. Between 2012 and 2018, the amount of pilot episodes that were ordered to series in the US varied from 6% to 36% each year. “The failure rate is an inherent part of our business,” says Stephenson. “Whether it’s an adaptation or not.” But when remakes fail, they often do so more loudly because people have higher expectations for shows that already exist.

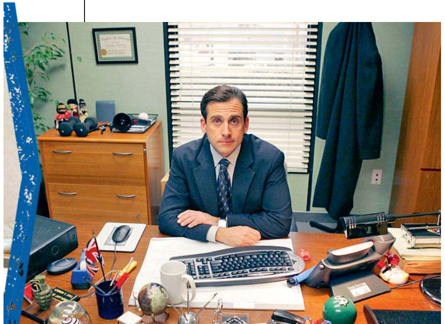
“It’s more of a public failure,” says Bicks. “More people are aware when it goes south.” The anonymous writer remembers it being a tough time when his series aired. “I got a torrent of abuse on Twitter,” he says.

While some may feel there is a scattershot approach to simply remaking seemingly anything and everything and hoping to hit the jackpot, others note a deep admiration and respect by the US for a country that constantly produces world-beating sitcoms. “We know how cynical American TV is but they are genuine enthusiasts for British comedy,” says Nye. Even Iannucci’s Thick of It nightmare meant that he got to meet HBO, which led to him making the hugely successful political satire Veep with them. “The very best thing possible came out of it,” he says. “But that initial process was like a weird out-of-body experience.”

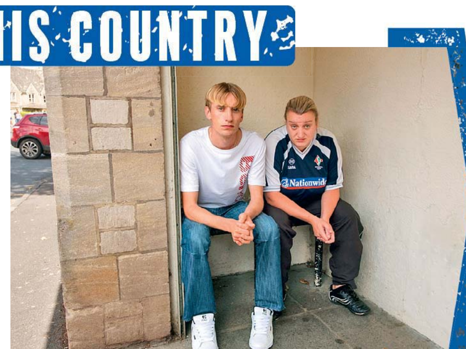
While remakes are continuing at pace throughout 2023, there is one quintessential British comedy character who seems constantly absent from US screens so far: Alan Partridge. Are we ever going to see the don of East Anglian broadcasting transformed into a US shock jock bro? “For 20 years we’ve been having enquiries about doing an American Alan,” laughs Iannucci. “But the whole thing is just us and Steve [Coogan]. Take that away and … what is there? There’s no point.”

*Ghosts US is available to stream on iPlayer.*

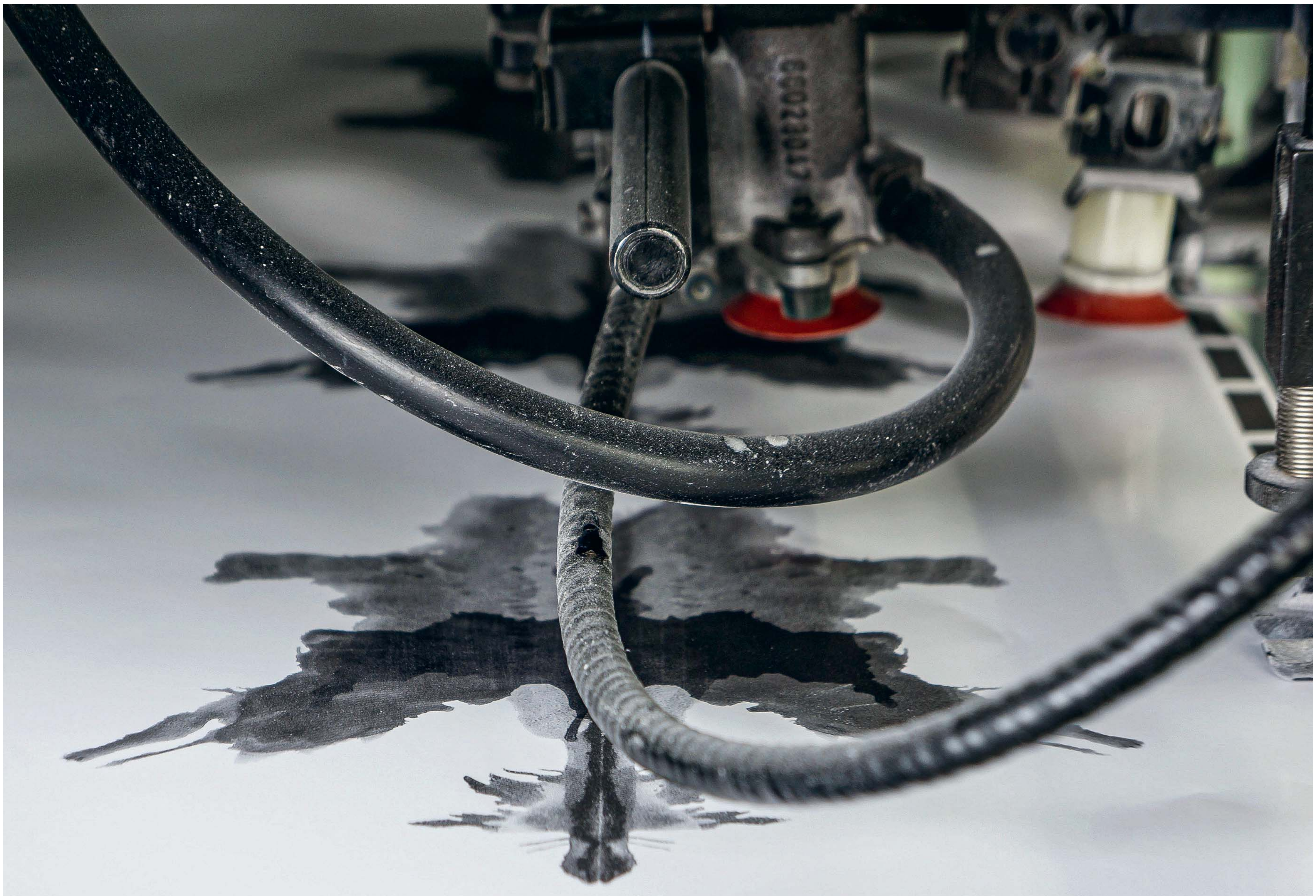
CHANNEL 4; ALAMY; BBC; NBCUNIVERSAL/GETTY; BBC; ALAMY



THIS COUNTRY







# The splat is out of the bag

Rorschach ink blots have been used as a diagnostic tool for 100 years, but the making of new ones, every five years, has been a closely guarded secret – until now

*Words & photography: Jeremy Millar*

For images that have been reproduced for more than a century and looked at, quite intently, by millions of people, there is a great deal of secrecy surrounding the Rorschach ink blots. These famous cards – both intensely guarded and instantly recognisable – continue to be used for psychological diagnosis around the world. New copies are only printed every five years or so, and no one has ever been allowed to document the process. So when I asked the publisher recently if I might do so, I had not expected them to say yes. There were conditions: the most perplexing was that if I were to document the printing of the Rorschach ink blots, I must do so without revealing any information about the printing of the Rorschach ink blots. It seemed a test as exquisitely elegant as the one for which the cards themselves are used.

The ink blots are named after Hermann Rorschach, a Swiss psychologist who died so young that he only makes it halfway through his biography. One Sunday in late March 1922 he is taking his wife Olga to see Peer Gynt at the theatre and a week – five pages – later he's dead. He had been born in Zürich 37 years earlier, the first of three children – two boys and a girl – to Philippine and Ulrich. His father was an extremely skilled artist and wrote a 100-page treatise titled Outline of a Theory of Form in which he considered many aspects of visual perception. Hermann became a gifted student and joined the elite academic Gymnasium in Schaffhausen, northern Switzerland. His skill as an artist was perhaps his defining characteristic, however, and led to his admiringly mocking nickname of Klex, a shortening of *klexen* or *klecksen*, which means something like "to daub". *Klex* also means ink blot.

Rorschach was not the first to consider the importance of these indeterminate forms, and in the newly






**Say what you see**
Rorschach ink blots (left) being generated with a spray; (clockwise from top) unique inks being mixed; a densitometer ensures consitency; and some of the blots bleed on to other sheets

developing science of psychology, ink blots were being used as prompts by which one might gauge a subject's imagination. As a medical student, Rorschach came to use them similarly, showing psychiatric patients and young teenagers alike newly made blots and noting what they saw. He soon began to consider these methods as somewhat unimaginative, and in 1917 he started developing his own test – although he thought of it more as an experiment – creating images which seem not to have been made at all but which were also not simply random.

As well as the ink blots, Rorschach also had to design the "protocol" by which the subject's responses were gathered and assessed, and here he adopted categories that seemed to relate to the avant-garde art of the period with which he was fascinated: Detail and Whole; Movement, Colour and Form. Each subject's response was given a code that not only related to what they saw but also *how well* they saw. Rorschach would then collate these and make some simple calculations, noting the percentages of response which corresponded to Movement, or Colour, or whether the noted Forms were well or poorly seen.

As Rorschach understood, if the responses of different subjects are to be compared, then the thing to which they are responding must be the same, and given that this is a test that depends on visual acuity, then it must be *exactly* the same. The practical difficulties of reproducing the ink blots led to delays in first publishing the work – which was given the title Psychodiagnostik – and when it did appear in 1921, Rorschach had personally supervised the production of the print run of 1,500 sets, even, at this late stage, eliminating elements that he considered irrelevant for



diagnostic purposes. The book was sold with 10 printed ink blots in a separate envelope; the buyer was to glue the images to card themselves.

It was a young apprentice, Herr Bögli, who worked on this first printed set of ink blot images, and he recorded Rorschach's instructions in the most minute detail, from subtle tonal shifts to the all-important asymmetries in what – at first glance – seem to be the most symmetrical of images. Bögli's notes became the "printing bible" for the production of the blots, and even when a new publisher took on the work in 1927, Bögli worked on it, and would continue to do so for decades to come.

While the inkblots were soon becoming well known, the method of their production remained secret – and that remains the case to this day. (Even the printer does not know it all: each ink colour is specially prepared elsewhere and is used for the ink blots alone.) Developments in print technology over the past century have meant that great care has had to be taken in order to ensure consistency. For most of this period, the ink blots were printed using a letterpress machine in which raised metal plates called – happily – clichés transfer a single colour on to the prepared sheet; when new plates had to be made, even a different composition of the metal used produced new effects – flatter colours, crisper edges – and minute, crucial adjustments then had to be made. For the past decade the ink blots have been produced using lithographic plates, but not with the cyan, magenta, yellow and black inks used to print this magazine, for example, but with the specially mixed Rorschach ones.

And so for an undisclosed period at the end of March, in an undisclosed location near Bern, I watched as both printer and publisher gazed intently at sheet after sheet taken off the press. Few ink blots can have been looked upon as carefully as these, although this time it was the forms being tested, and not those looking at them. I was not allowed to look so directly, however, so my camera was turned obliquely, glancing seemingly familiar shapes obscured by other objects or sliding across their glossy surfaces. There were ink blots and stains everywhere, of course, and sometimes the shapes would seem to slip from the printed sheets and surface elsewhere – on plastic tubs or radiators – and one could not help but wonder what any of them might mean. At other times, test prints would mean that ink blots would be overlaid one upon the other and new mutations would form, and one could not help but wonder what new conditions they might diagnose.

## There are ink stains everywhere: sometimes they slip on to tubs or radiators

Much of my life has been spent looking at images, wondering what they might mean, and though these ink blots may not be artworks, they operate perhaps in a similar way, depending on a "leaning-in" of the viewer and then inviting them to do so. And, invited, I leaned in too, in a small printshop in a village settled in a Swiss valley and there I found … well, I cannot say.

The ink blots will probably not be printed again for another 10 years, and this may be the final time that they are mechanically reproduced with smudges and stains, *klex*. What do you see?

*Jeremy Millar is an artist and head of programme, MA writing, at the Royal College of Art, London. All photographs are from the series Detail and Whole; Movement, Colour and Form (2023).*


WESTON PARK, SHROPSHIRE
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WALL OF DEATH
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CIRQUE BIJOU PRESENTS THE SILENT FOREST
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CURATED BY JOSIE & ROB DA BANK
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RUDIMENTAL
THE HUMAN LEAGUE
GROOVE ARMADA DJ SET
SOPHIE ELLIS-BEXTOR
CONFIDENCE MAN
SAM RYDER • MELANIE C
ELLA HENDERSON • SARA COX
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MR TUMBLE • MISTER MAKER
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MEGA SKATE RAMPS
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TREE CLIMBING
THE WOODLAND TRUST
SPINNEY HOLLOW CRAFT VILLAGE
BIG BUILD WITH WOODLAND TRIBE
WILD RUNS & BOOTCAMP
FOOD + FEASTING
THE FEAST COLLECTIVE
THE BIG PICNIC GREEN
KHANA WALA BAZAAR
MILLER'S MARSHMALLOWS
FIRE FEASTING
SLOW MOTION
ALL DAY FREE YOGA & MEDITATION
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# Prodigal son

NF has attracted a huge audience with his deeply personal rhymes about depression, trauma and 'the Almighty'. But don't call him a Christian rapper. 'I'm not a worship artist,' he says

*Words by Michael Segalov*
*Portrait: Jon Taylor Sweet*

The week I meet Nashville-based rapper, Nathan John Feuerstein, AKA NF at his Tennessee home, his latest record - Hope - hits No 2 in both the Billboard Hot 100 and the UK album chart. He has form: his last two albums topped the US charts on their respective releases. This summer, he will embark on a 30-date North America arena tour; each show on its October European leg has already sold out. Yet, despite his evident success, the 32-year-old is something of an unknown entity; elusive, with little name-recognition beyond his loyal fanbase. Rarely will you hear his music on the radio; his latest album received little by way of media fanfare or reviews. And, lying back on a large cream sofa, he says he likes it that way.

"In the music industry the perception of how big artists are, and how big they really are, is often really different," Feuerstein says. " I might be under the radar, and rarely have my day-to-day life interrupted, but I can come to your city and sell 10,000 tickets. I'd rather be actually killing it than have people *think* I'm killing it. The way I look at it, I have the best of both worlds."

It is just one of the apparent contradictions that shape our 90-minute conversation. He is signed to a Christian imprint of Universal Music Group, and often raps about God, but rejects the label of Christian rapper. "I started out in the Christian space," he says, "but I didn't really like it … it's not where I see myself today."

Throughout his career, comparisons have been made with Eminem, and not solely because there aren't many other chart-topping white rappers from Michigan. Certainly on NF's earlier records, his hero's influence was somewhat inescapable. But before we meet, it's suggested I might want to avoid bringing Eminem up at all.

"Most of the time," he replies, when I ask why, "I don't go into [Eminem] in interviews. It's the headline people try to twist." That said, Feuerstein brings up Eminem repeatedly. "He's the biggest influence on my music still."

And while his lyrics explore the most personal of topics - childhood abuse, mental health struggles, his mum's suicide - he seems guarded, not wanting to give too much away: "I say what I want to say in my music."

Still, we cover some ground. Feuerstein grew up in Gladwin; small-

**Under the radar**
NF can sell 10,000 tickets but his music is rarely on the radio



FILMMAGIC

**'In the Christian world, everyone pretends everything is OK. I didn't feel that way'**

town Michigan. "We lived in a trailer for a while. My parents got divorced when I was young. Dad remarried. I lived with my grandparents. I got into music at some stage. I had anger issues." In his late teens, he worked as an electrician, while uploading self-produced original tracks to YouTube. In 2014, he signed to Capitol Christian Music Group.

He seems reluctant to talk much about his break in Christian music. "It's not that I didn't want to be with a mainstream label," he says, "but that's all I knew." Content-wise, his music did reference "the Almighty", but he felt his outlook didn't chime with other artists on the scene. "In the Christian world everyone wants to pretend everything is OK," he says. "It feels sometimes like the end of songs have to have this great, positive ending. My music didn't fit, because I didn't feel that way."

It wasn't his only misgiving: "If you're playing a show at a church, it's not really your show. At church shows, people turn up, but it's not for you." He started to swap church gigs for clubs, and never looked back. Mostly, however, he says he realised what separated him from self-defined Christian rappers was his output's intent. "I'm not a worship artist," he says. "That's not my music's purpose. I don't think I'm a preacher. I want anyone to listen to my music, believe in God or not." He sees himself, instead, as a rapper who is Christian and references his faith in his work, much like many contemporary hip-hop artists: Kendrick Lamar, J Cole, Drake.

While God is a definite presence in NF's lyrics, far more notable is darkness and pain. Previously, songs have included Hate Myself ("Suicide thoughts come and go like a guest to me") and Trauma ("Scream and yell, but I feel speechless / Ask for help, you call it weakness"). There's also How Could You Leave Us, a 2016 track about his mum's suicide by overdose.

"It was a dark, sad, emotional track," he says. "The hardest thing I ever recorded." Back then, the raw pain was palpable ("I ain't gon' say that I forgive you 'cos it hasn't happened ... If you really cared for me, then where you at then?") There's another track about his mum on his new album, titled Mama that serves as a tonal shift ("I ever make it up there when I see you / I hope you're smilin', 'cos you deserve it"). Generally, he's in a better place today. "I'm not all perfect now," he says. "I put an album out called Hope, but I've still got a lot of growing to do. A couple of weeks ago I was depressed for three days straight. But I do feel hopeful more than I used to [be]. When I wrote [the 2019 album] The Search I was so depressed that I couldn't function."

It is this vulnerability, alongside his technical rap ability (much like Eminem, he has a capacity to squeeze impressively long lyrics into the smallest of spaces) that explains Feuerstein's popularity. As his following grows, how will he handle an increase in interest? He seems unsure. He's certainly struggling to enjoy his success to date. "My wife tells me I'm always stressed about the next show, the next video, the next album ... I never enjoy the here and now. Before you know it, I'll be 40 and done making music. And, man, I never enjoyed it? I'm trying to work on that."

*NF's album Hope is out now.*





THE CULTURAL PRESCRIPTION FOR ...

# The madness of crowds

Dickens depicts the Gordon riots while Alessia Cara drifts through a party: our critics choose culture about the seething masses



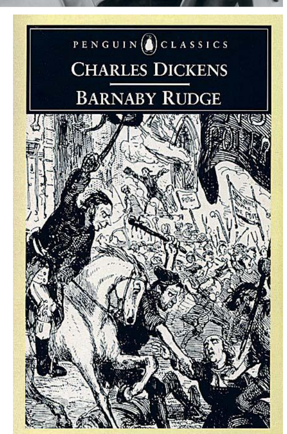
## Theatre
### The Burnt City

No one does it quite like Punchdrunk. In this immense, immersive company's hands, a crowd is entirely malleable. With the audience anonymised by masks, we can be anything they want us to be. Its current production, The Burnt City, allows us to wander around the fall of Troy, bustled together and split apart as the evening goes on. The event is less about the story and more about the scenery and our exhilarating freedom to roam within it, being at once invisible and a central part of the performance. Inviting endless curiosity in its open-world settings, Punchdrunk has set the standard for how to manage a crowd.
*Kate Wyver*



## Film
### Modern Times

The cinema was born out of the crowd: masses of people seeing a specific drama on a scale not imagined before. Charlie Chaplin was himself a beneficiary of the mass production of celebrity. In Modern Times, he is walking on the streets and notices a truck with a flag stuck to the planks of timber poking out of its back (a safety precaution to prevent collision). The flag falls off. Charlie picks it up and runs along behind, waving it, trying to attract the driver's attention. Then a crowd of communist demonstrators turn the corner and happen to march up behind him, and to the cops it looks as if Charlie is the flag-waving rabble-rousing leader. He is arrested: his personal intentions were irrelevant in the wider stream of history. Charlie thought he was acting as an individual and got caught up in the crowd.
*Peter Bradshaw*




## Book
### Barnaby Rudge

There are plenty of wonderful crowd scenes in the novels of Charles Dickens, but in Barnaby Rudge he really lets loose, spending page after raging-and-roaring page describing the chaos of the anti-papist Gordon riots. The "outrages of the mob", he writes, are like those of a "mad monster", "more terrible when roused" than the ocean, "more unreasonable ... more cruel". It is all frighteningly familiar, especially when Dickens shows us the demagogues and manipulators whose false accusations drive the crowds to a frenzied attack on Parliament. It can feel as if he's describing the era of Brexit and Trump as much as the events of 1780. *Sam Jordison*



## Art
### Christ Mocked

Three's a crowd, they say. In Christ Mocked by Hieronymus Bosch, four bullying tormentors crowd a passive, helpless innocent. They swarm him as he ignores their japes and cruelties, get in his face, enclose him, in a claustrophobic image of other people as a mob of heartless monsters. You get the feeling this is how Bosch, consumed by visions of hell and fantasies of paradise, saw the neighbours who surrounded him in the Dutch town where he lived. To his vulnerable and isolated imagination, others look like an inhuman crowd. He anticipates the nightmare crowds of Munch and Poe in this medieval and yet uneasily modern painting. *Jonathan Jones*



## Music
### Here

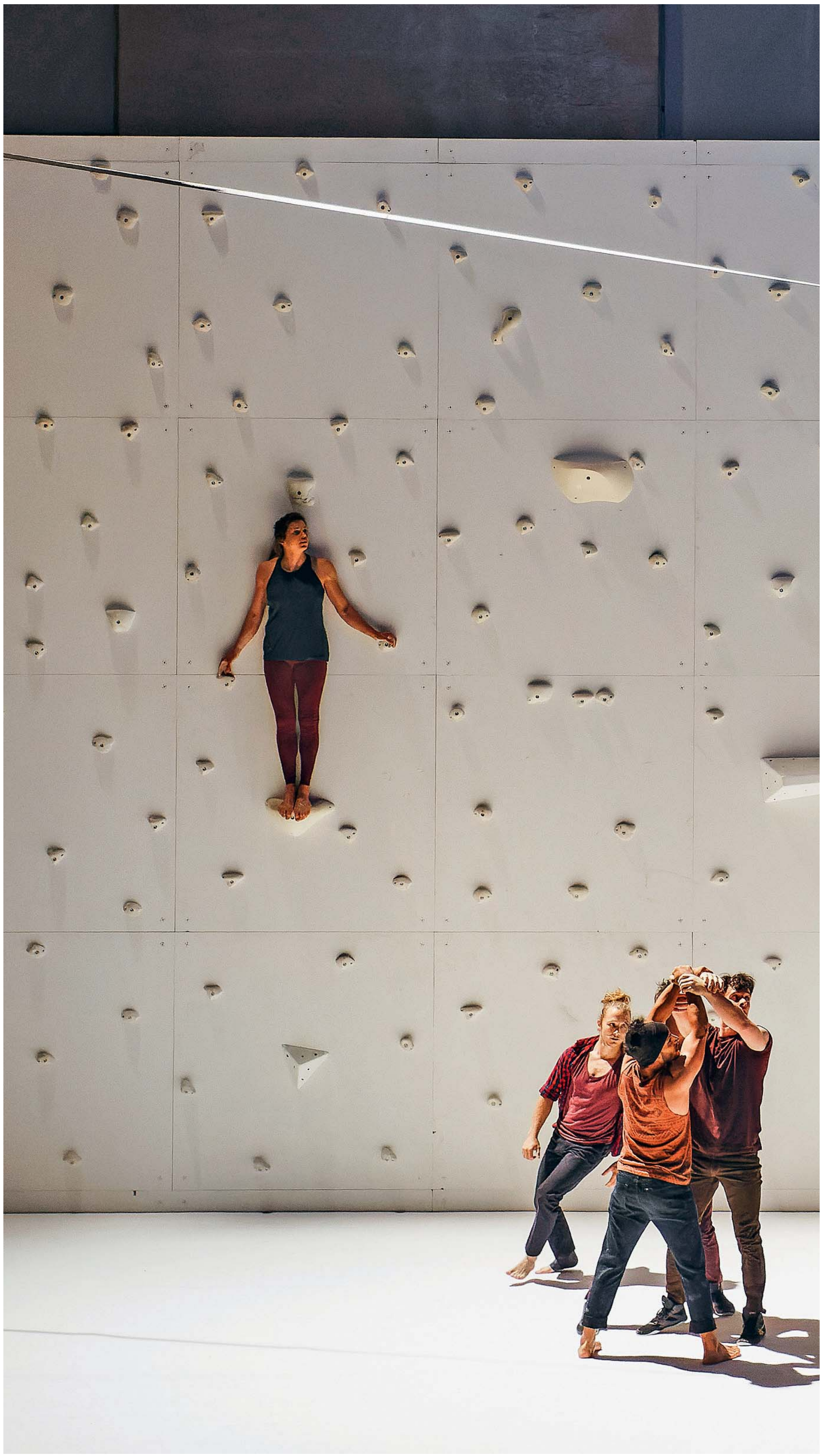
If HBO's Euphoria has you believing that all Gen Z-ers love to party, Alessia Cara's 2015 hit Here still stands up as an anthem for the antisocial. Under a slinky sample of Isaac Hayes's Ike's Rap II (also well known via Portishead's Glory Box and Tricky's Hell Is Round the Corner), it perfectly captures the feeling of drifting from room to room at an overcrowded house party, swerving drinks and inane conversation. "Some girl's talking 'bout her haters / She ain't got none." Cara may not be impressed by what she sees, but there is a subtle fondness in how specifically she captures the rituals of teendom, letting the chaos wash over her as a rite of social passage. *Jenessa Williams*

JULIAN ABRAMS; GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY; THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

# The high life

## It started with a tightrope walk over the Seine: now highliner Nathan Paulin and free climber Nina Caprez are bringing their brand of aerial audacity into a new environment – the theatre

*Words: Lyndsey Winship*



You can look the video up online: a man balancing on an inch-wide rope, carefully putting one foot in front of another. He is 70 metres above the ground, behind him is the vast Eiffel Tower, below him the River Seine. From a distance, the speck of him fades into the cityscape.

This is Nathan Paulin. He is a French highliner, another term for a tightrope walker, except that Paulin uses a slackline – the name is fairly self-explanatory – and he's never been near a circus. Paulin is usually to be found rigging his slackline between two mountains in the Alps, or walking a record-breaking 2.2km, 100m in the air, to the island of Mont Saint Michel off the Normandy coast, wind whirling around him. "The first feeling is always fear," says Paulin, 29, talking of the moment he steps out on the line. "But after the first few steps I start to feel comfortable. When I'm on the line, I feel more sensitive about everything. I'm not a spectator but I feel like I belong to the environment. I can hear everything around me."

The destination for the Eiffel Tower walk was the Théâtre National de Chaillot, Paris's dedicated dance theatre on the north bank of the river, where choreographer Rachid Ouramdane is artistic director. Ouramdane lives between Paris and the French Alps, where he's surrounded by people who spend their time mountaineering and paragliding. He had noticed the way they talked about scaling up or jumping off mountains, not just in terms of seeking an adrenaline rush. Rather "it revealed a kind of deep philosophy, a way to connect to nature, an incredible awareness of the living world around them".

That was something Ouramdane wanted to explore as an artist. First by inviting Paulin to walk across the Seine, then trying to translate what he does to inside the theatre, along with eight acrobats from Compagnie XY and the Swiss free climber Nina Caprez in a performance called Corps Extrêmes, which Ouramdane calls "halfway between a documentary and an art piece". The piece arrives at Sadler's Wells this month for a two-night run.

Caprez, 36, has already chronicled many of her climbs, on film (the documentaries Swissway to Heaven and WoGü) and on her blog. There is jaw-dropping footage of her climbing in the Alps and elsewhere, scaling seemingly sheer cliffsides, fingers and toes finding invisible holds, conquering overhanging rocks, laughing, falling, swearing and triumphantly pulling her way to the summit.

"Since I love sharing my climbing experience with a large audience, I was really keen to join the project, even though I had no idea what the outcome would be," says Caprez. "I was just trusting Rachid. I had no idea who he was but I found him really funny, he had a really good way with people."

She and Paulin didn't know what they were getting themselves into. "It was totally new to me that environment," Caprez says. "I never work in a group, really, I'm mostly hanging alone on my wall. Often Nathan and I were just watching, like: 'OK, what the hell are we doing here?!'" For Paulin, used to standing alone in the sky in vast open landscapes, being inside the studio "was like being a bird in a cage", he says.

Out of their natural habitat, gradually Paulin and Caprez came to make sense of the theatre, especially once the audience arrived. "Now I really get it," says Caprez. "It's not just people watching a video at home, but being in this room, feeling the vibes. This is what I'm most excited about."

Paulin agrees: "There is no way to cheat. We have Instagram and all these videos where you can make people think you're doing something crazy just because you film it this way or that way. Here you are for an hour on stage with 1,000 people watching you." The physical risk might not be as great as, say, free climbing El Capitan, but the stakes are raised in a different way.

Caprez has also picked up some new skills as an acrobat. She and the performers from Compagnie XY climb, hang, jump and fall, throw and catch each other and balance precariously. The set for the show began with a single



PASCALE CHOLETTE

**Everything on the line** Climber Nina Caprez (far left, on the wall) and Nathan Paulin on the highline, collaborate on Corps Extrêmes

## 'We try to touch on the vulnerability of people being in a place that is not normal for a human'

slackline high above the stage, and a blank, flat, white climbing wall. Then the team went to the Gorges du Verdon in the south of France, and filmed Carpez climbing and Paulin highlining so that the images could be projected on to the stage. The audience too will be able to get up close with the texture of the rock and the awesomeness of the landscape, while they hear the performers' thoughts in voiceover.

It is thrilling to get even a small sense of what Caprez and Paulin experience. "Once I touch the rock there are no more thoughts," says Caprez. "There's no consciousness about anything, but everything is there. Your sensitivity is so high that actually you can do incredible things." Any average person would be terrified, looking down at a few hundred metres' drop, but Caprez says: "I don't feel fear, I feel excited, and this excitement really guides me to a high level of awareness and I totally live in the present. I don't project myself to the past or the future. I don't see myself climbing the top. The only thing that counts is metre by metre, step by step, pitch by pitch. It's a very special state of mind."

Caprez has written about when her daughter was born with a heart defect and had to have surgery at a few months old. The only thing she could think to do to keep her sanity while they waited for news on her four-hour surgery was to go climbing. "That was the hardest experience of my life and climbing then was more like an escape," she says, "because no matter what's in my life I can turn off my brain. It makes me think positive; it gives me power." The surgery was a success and her daughter is now fine.

You must feel powerful out on the highline, too, I say to Paulin, when you're defying what seems possible, putting physics on hold. Sure, he says, "but I also feel so small. You feel that you are nothing. Sometimes you feel you are doing something hard and you are mastering it, you are able to deal with the line moving and the wind, but at the same time you are just dealing with the elements, you are not the master. You are just a little guy walking on the line.

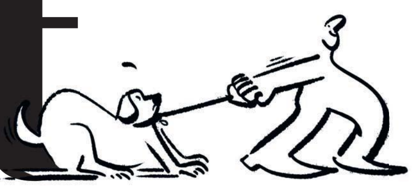
"I really like to feel things," he adds. "Some of my best memories on the highlines were when it was windy and rainy and I can feel more. You can feel it with your skin." Ouramdane brings up a quote he heard recently: that we teach people to appreciate literature and maths, but not the rain on our faces. Paulin has found a way to embrace that lesson.

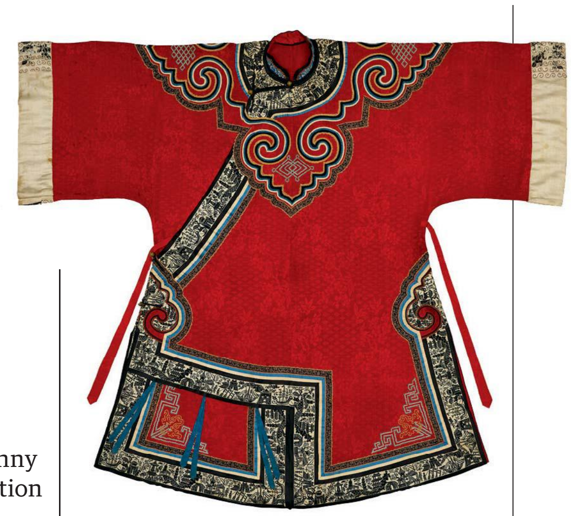
So the extreme body of the show's title is less about the cast's formidable acrobatic feats, more about the superpowers of our senses. "It's a choreography of awareness," says Ouramdane. He refers to the apocryphal idea of the Inuit having 100 words for snow. "When you speak with Nathan or Nina they start to make visible nuances you don't usually perceive," he says. "I remember when we were shooting, Nina said we should go fast because soon the texture of the rocks will be different. She knows the rhythm of the day, and the fact the rocks will change after a certain time of being in the sun, even if it's the same rock."

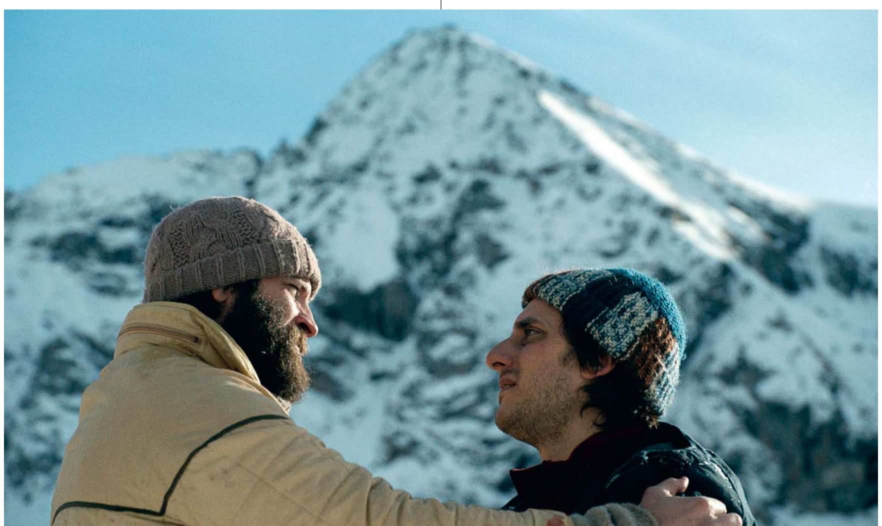
There is definitely a message in Corps Extrêmes about how out of tune we've become with our environment, how we can only survive by working with nature, not against it. "What we try to touch on is the vulnerability of those people being in a place that is not normal for a human." Or rather, from a distance it looks like vulnerability, but because they can activate this hyper-awareness of their surroundings, "you realise their fragility is not a weakness," says Ouramdane. "But it could become a strength when you know how to use it."

*Corps Extrêmes is at Sadler's Wells, London, 23 & 24 May.*

# Out







# Going out & Staying in

A cultural primer for the week ahead, whether you're out in the throng or on the chaise longue ...

## Cinema

**The Eight Mountains**
**Out now**
The Cannes film festival is unfolding this week, but here's a chance for UK audiences to see what some of the fuss was about last year, with this 2022 Prix du Jury winner (above) now in cinemas. A luscious, heartbreaking and sweeping epic about a friendship that develops in the picturesque Alpine section of Italy, this is pure cinema.

**Eurovision: Grand Final Live**
**Cinemas nationwide, Saturday**
If you can't make it to Liverpool to watch the finale in person, don't worry: cinemas across the country have your back. You can join Graham Norton and co for a special live broadcast on the big screen of the most essential annual event in the cultural calendar.

**Book Club: The Next Chapter**
**Out now**
The 2018 original was such a smash that a Book Club sequel was all but guaranteed; the only surprise is that it's taken this long to get Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda, Candice Bergen and Mary Steenburgen (AKA the finest cast anyone has ever been able to put together in the history of cinema) back together for another go around.

**LOCO London comedy film festival**
**Hackney Picturehouse, London, to Sun**
Running all weekend, the UK's biggest comedy film festival is back with a mixture of old and new films, including Ealing comedy classics, short films and dark new comedy-drama Klokkenluider, the directorial debut of the actor Neil Maskell, starring Tom Burke and Jenna Coleman. *Catherine Bray*

## Gigs

**Donny McCaslin**
**Jazz Cafe, London, Monday**
When composer Maria Schneider recommended her saxophonist Donny McCaslin to David Bowie, a connection was formed that gave Bowie's last album, 2016's Blackstar, much of its dark intensity. Bowie's influence has, in turn, made McCaslin's post-Coltrane playing more anthemically art-rockish, but his jazz edge has mostly stayed sharp. *John Fordham*

**Don Giovanni**
**Glyndebourne Opera House, Lewes, Friday to 15 July**
Glyndebourne's 2023 summer season launches with a new production of the most enigmatic and dramatically challenging of Mozart's operas. Director Mariame Clément offers a Don Giovanni for the post-#MeToo world; Andrey Zhilikhovsky is Giovanni, with Mikhail Timoshenko as Leporello, Venera Gimadieva as Anna and Rutan Mantashyan as Elvira. *Andrew Clements*

**Pusha T**
**Tuesday to 20 May; tour starts Dublin**
After having to postpone from November due to "production issues", Pusha T is finally ready to take 2022's excellent album It's Almost Dry out on tour. That album will likely fill the majority of the set, but fingers crossed for some of the Neptunes-produced Clipse classics. *Michael Cragg*

**Wesley Joseph**
**Koko, London, Thursday**
London-based polymath Wesley Joseph (below) plays a one-off show in support of his second mini-album, Glow. Expect the singer and rapper to create the perfect atmosphere for his filmic song suites, full of dense avant-R&B - think Jai Paul meets Blood Orange. *MC*



## Art

**China's Hidden Century**
**The British Museum, London, Thursday to 8 October**
In the 19th century, China's ancient social order, once admired by Europeans, came under economic and political attack from western empires and faced rebellion at home. This epic survey of the period from 1796 to 1912 takes in everything from traditional robes (pictured above) to the opium wars to the birth of modern China.

**Patrick Caulfield**
**Josh Lilley, London, Thursday to 20 June**
This ironic pop artist captured the louche and seedy decadence of 70s London in paintings and prints that zoom in cruelly on sad restaurants, pretentious furnishings, a glass half full. His bold outlines and bright colours have been copied by other artists yet never with the same haunting pathos.

**Gwen John**
**Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, Saturday to 8 October**
This early 20th-century Welsh artist's paintings of solitary women are engrossing and silently powerful. John had a more dramatic life than her meditative works might suggest, living in France in the heyday of the avant garde and having an affair with Rodin. But her art is poetic and melancholy.

**Melati Suryodarmo**
**Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, Wednesday to 3 September**
This acclaimed Indonesian performance artist is famous for gruelling live actions that can last for hours and put her and the audience under strain. She also makes videos. Suryodarmo appears along with artists and commmunity activists "delegated" by her in what amounts to a retrospective of her art and vision. *Jonathan Jones*

AP; LEWIS VORN; TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM; BBC/ELEVEN

# In



## Stage

**The Second Woman**
**Young Vic, London, Friday & 20 May**
For 24 hours, Ruth Wilson performs the same scene 100 times, burning through the 100 different men who take turns playing opposite her. It's an extraordinary, audacious idea: audiences can get tickets for chunks of the performance or stay for the entire wild ride.
*Kate Wyver*

**Shewolves**
**Theatre By the Lake, Keswick, Saturday; touring to 8 July**
Fourteen-year-old Priya and Lou embark on a climate crisis-fuelled adventure, finding hope and the power of friendship along the way. Sarah Middleton's sparky, uplifting show tours the UK before a run at London's Southwark Playhouse. *KW*

**Rachel Bloom**
**Bloomsbury theatre, London, Mon to Fri**
The creator and star of mental health-themed musical dramedy Crazy Ex-Girlfriend brings her new live show. And if the title is anything to go by, Death, Let Me Do My Special is set to be yet another anxiety-riven comic extravaganza.
*Rachel Aroesti*

**BalletLorent: Rapunzel**
**Darlington Hippodrome, Wednesday & Thursday**
Liv Lorent made her first Rapunzel a decade ago as a family show, but now she's created an adult version, delving into childlessness, miscarriage, grief and child abuse. Here you can see both the kids' show (Thur) and the After Dark version (Wed). *Lyndsey Winship*



## Streaming

**Ten Pound Poms**
**Sunday, 9pm, BBC One**
Your classic Sunday night period drama with a twist: this one (above) is set in Australia. From the writer of Brassic comes a series about the post-second world war Britons who accepted the invitation to resettle for a tenner, only to find that life in Oz wasn't quite the sunny idyll they'd been advertised.

**High Desert**
**Wednesday, Apple TV+**
Patricia Arquette stars in this heartfelt yet diligently farcical comedy as Peggy, a charmingly disastrous drug addict who decides to become a private investigator after the death of her mother. Rupert Friend, Matt Dillon, Brad Garrett and Weruche Opia round out the supporting cast.

**Anna Nicole Smith: You Don't Know Me**
**Tuesday, Netflix**
Sensitive documentaries about mistreated tabloid stars of the 90s and 00s are suddenly 10 a penny. Now it's the turn of the late Anna Nicole Smith - model and, infamously, wife of 90-year-old billionaire J Howard Marshall - to be reconsidered through an arguably more enlightened and more empathic, 2020s-style lens.

**Rolf Harris: Hiding in Plain Sight**
**Thursday, ITVX**
Until 2013, Rolf Harris was a national treasure, with decades of hit singles, art programmes and Glastonbury appearances behind him. But when he was charged with sexual assault as part of Operation Yewtree, his downfall was swift. This two-part film examines how he fooled the public for so long. *RA*



## Games

**The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom**
**Out now, Nintendo Switch**
Storied adventurer Link (above) heads back into the kingdom of Hyrule, now equipped with the ability to smash bits of scenery together to make flying rafts and exploding shields. This will be one of the year's biggest games.

**Humanity**
**Out Tuesday, PlayStation 4, 5 & VR2**
You are a luminescent shiba inu dog, and you must guide crowds of ambling people to pillars of light so that they may ascend to who-knows-where. An unusual-looking puzzle game, and a great one.
*Keza MacDonald*



## Albums

**Alison Goldfrapp - The Love Invention**
**Out now**
After seven albums of electropop experimentation as one half of Goldfrapp alongside Will Gregory, singer, songwriter and producer Alison Goldfrapp (above) steps out on her solo debut. While squelchy single NeverStop recalls Goldfrapp's gleaming pop opus Supernature, So Hard So Hot is sweatier and grimier.

**Jonas Brothers - The Album**
**Out now**
Four years after staging a successful comeback via 2019's Happiness Begins, the Jo Bros are back with their sixth album, titled, erm, The Album. Bolting 70s soft rock on to their sleek pop, nostalgic recent single Waffle House - named after the US restaurant chain - extols the virtues of family loyalty.

**BC Camplight - The Last Rotation of Earth**
**Out now**
New Jersey-born, Manchester-based Brian Christinzio isn't afraid to pour his misery into his music; past albums have touched on deportation, death and depression. On this sixth album of elegantly crumpled indie rock, written after his fiancee left him, Christinzio brings some blackly comic touches to his various tales of woe.

**Kaytraminé - Kaytraminé**
**Out now**
Grammy-winning producer Kaytranada (Kali Uchis, Kelela) and playful rapper Aminé join forces for this new collaborative project (below). It's led by the percussive, barbecue soundtrack-ready anthem 4EVA, featuring a suitably sun-kissed Pharrell Williams - make sure you update your summer playlist accordingly. *MC*





## Brain food

**The Stones and Brian Jones**
**Monday, 9pm, BBC Two**
An intimate look at the short life of the Rolling Stones' founding member Brian Jones (above). Film-maker Nick Broomfield remembers a teenage encounter with the instrumentalist, while surviving members explore how Jones fuelled their sound.

**IMMA Online**
**Online**
Ireland's Museum of Modern Art boasts a website packed with more than 3,500 digitised art works taken from its expansive collection. Explore everything from Eimear Walshe's work on Irish colonial history to the painting of Jack B Yeats.

**White Smoke: America's Chemsex Killer**
**Podcast**
A 10-part investigation into the influential American political donor Ed Buck's criminal sex life expands into a fascinating examination of power dynamics in the queer community, outlining the pervasive and often abusive world of chemsex. *Ammar Kalia*

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# BOOKS

ESSAYS, FICTION *and*

# 'I was a child actor … I think the impulse to write is similar'

Emma Cline talks about the power of being an outsider, growing up in a family of seven siblings – and exploring the Hamptons set in her follow-up to The Girls.
*By Emma Brockes*


Emma Cline at home in Los Angeles

EMMA CLINE is a writer who seemed to hit her stride straight out of the gate. Her bestselling 2016 debut The Girls, which told the story of a Manson family-type cult, was praised for its canny structure, moving seamlessly between time frames, and for the sheer density of imagery, although what was most striking about the novel was how assured it was.

In person, Cline is more hesitant. We are in Brooklyn today, in the flat of a friend she is staying with while visiting from LA. The 34-year-old is Californian by birth and upbringing, and it is tempting to read in her a sort of wispy Didion-esque aura one associates with that part of the world. She appears watchful, her voice tremulous with good humour, and she is a leaver of pauses, some more agonised than others, while seeking out the right meaning. Writing her new novel The Guest was, she says, partly a reaction against The Girls – a deliberate flexing of other muscles – and partly a way of "giving myself the challenge of can I write a novel-length work that has some of the tension I like in a short story".

Appearing seven years after The Girls, The Guest is a contemporary tale that unfolds over the course of seven days. Its protagonist, Alex, has almost no backstory. The action is limited to a few square miles of Long Island. There are no deaths, or explosions, or external dramas of any great magnitude, just an intense engagement with the narrow field of vision before her, as Alex moves through an increasingly stressful and impossible week. The tension never wavers. It is weirdly compelling and often very funny. The story follows Alex as she leaves the city, bridges burned, debts trailing, in pursuit of a wealthy older man she is dating to his second home in the Hamptons. This is rich material for Cline, who trains a chilly eye on the preposterous affluence and exclusivity of that part of the world. We never leave Alex's head and through her passive, affectless gaze find ourselves in an environment in which she is almost invisible; a young woman and former sex worker, a grifter of sorts, who believes herself to be in a "real" relationship with a man about whom the reader may come to different conclusions.

The inquiries of the novel weren't always apparent to Cline at the time of writing, but are "things that I only notice in retrospect. With Alex it is this question of: is there a weird power in being an object? What is that power? What are the limits of that power? And what does it mean to have that invisibility, so that people will do and say things in front of you that they wouldn't say and do if they thought you were a full-fledged human being?"

Some of Alex's deadpan observations are so on the money they made me wince to imagine on whom Cline might have based them. One night, Alex is taken by the man to the house of a rich friend of his, where the hostess, Helen, is regarded by the much younger woman with frank derision. Helen has invested in an app, which if she were to be believed, writes Cline, "was perfecting a technology that diagnosed illness from a breathalyzer you plugged into your phone". Helen says certain phrases with emphasis: "SDKs. Daily granularity. Someone must



Cover: Michelle Groskopf

have just taught her what these terms meant. 'Our art needs more technology and our technology needs more art,' Helen bleated, looking into the middle distance." On the wall, there are framed sketches, as Alex thinks, "probably the leftovers of someone important. People like Helen loved to display the artefacts of creativity as if that implicated her in the process."

Cline spent time in the Hamptons during the decade she lived in New York after finishing graduate school at Columbia University. What struck her most about it was its deceptive mildness; that part of the world, at a glance, looks like England and many of the towns have English names. Certainly compared with where Cline came from, a part of northern California where, she says, "the beaches are rocky and the waters are shark-infested and it's more of an aggressive encounter with the elements". By contrast, Long Island's "micro-community" can appear almost "surreal" in its placidity. "But then [underneath there are] all the ways in which it is mediated by money. It's so obviously not a place for outsiders. And there are all these overt and less overt ways that they make that clear. That combination struck me as very strange and engaging. I wondered what it would look like to be in this setting when you weren't supposed to be."

In The Girls, which Cline wrote over a period of years when she lived in an unheated shed in the Brooklyn garden of a friend (more on that in a moment), the protagonist, Evie, is a 14-year-old experimenting with what happens when you let yourself drift; from your family, your community, yourself. Cline's eye for an arresting image is never more acute than when she's describing young women, in this case followers of a cult leader, who move around "with their air of biblical poverty", simultaneously powerless and unnerving. In public, writes Cline, these woman appear as "sleek and thoughtless as sharks breaching the water".

Drift – the idea of coming in and out of focus – interests Cline. With Evie, this particular dynamic ends up placing her on the periphery of a notorious murder. In the case of Alex in The Guest, it gets her evicted from the tiny, precarious ice floe of safety she had been, for a second, enjoying. Cline exposes the peaceful civility that characterises the wealthy spaces of the Hamptons as a sham, "the appearance of calm demanding an endless campaign of violent intervention".

At one point in a group setting, Alex strategically makes herself small and invisible, and Cline writes, "she was used to this, the politeness of pretending that things that were happening were not, in fact, happening" – a particularly female form of self-erasure. "I had this image of a woman out in the ocean and people were waiting for her on shore. And once she got to shore she would have to face some horrible thing. And the feeling of just being, like, can't I stay out here for ever? Knowing you have to go in but not wanting to go in. That emotional atmosphere is what I was looking for. But of course you don't want a lecture about female agency or who has power and who doesn't. This stuff naturally ripples out of a character, but not in a conscious way for me."

Cline's sensitivity to space, power and group dynamics all draw from her family background. She grew up in Sonoma, northern California, where her parents were winemakers, the second oldest of seven children – five of them girls – all born within 10 years of each other. Even now, it occasionally startles her how many of them there are. "Sometimes when I'm out to dinner with friends I'm like, OK, this plus four more people would be my family." She laughs. To have that many siblings takes up an awful lot of one's hard drive. As Cline says: "The psychic weight of a human being is huge. And seven of them?!" But those relationships are nourishing and "have been so sweet to me, especially as an adult". Her next youngest sister, Hilary, is her first reader and she dedicated The Guest to her.

## 'You don't want a lecture about female agency or who has power – it has to come out of the character'

As a young person growing up in a family that large, finding a singular identity was paramount and as a child, Cline wanted to be an actor. She took herself off to auditions and booked a few jobs. (She had a small role as the young Billie Jean King in a 2001 TV movie called When Billie Met Bobby, in which Holly Hunter played the adult tennis legend.) Now she smiles and looks pained. "I was a really bad child actor. Extremely bad." Did she know she was bad at the time? "I could tell based on the reactions of the adults that sometimes I was bad, and sometimes I was less bad, but I couldn't tell the difference. So it was this baffling and stressful experience." But it was the first indication, says Cline, that she was "drawn to artificiality; that you could make a world off to the side of the real world" in a way that was related to writing. "I think the impulse is similar. Like, what does it mean to be a human, why do humans act the way they do, what does it mean if they're saying *this* but their face is saying *this*?"

After studying for a degree in art at Middlebury College in Vermont and receiving an MFA from Columbia she started writing The Girls. Cline had already had some success at that point; a short story she wrote in college, Marion, had won the Paris Review's prestigious Plimpton prize and publishers were circling. When The Girls eventually sold at auction as part of a three-book deal, it went for a seven-figure sum. (The screen rights, which are now with Hulu, were at one stage owned by Scott Rudin and there is a script in existence written by Todd Field, writer and director of the recent Oscar-nominated movie Tar. "He wrote a bananas and great script for it; so cool," says Cline, who has no idea where the project lies in development.)

She came up with the idea for The Girls, which tells a loose version of the Sharon Tate murder, as a kind of "container" for a lot of thoughts she wanted to explore "about California, and girlhood", among other things. While writing it, she lived in a shed in her friend's garden. It was unheated, there was a toilet but no shower, and it got so cold in the winter that "the olive oil got slushy. Oh and I remember the many months of silverfish." She laughs. "What was so great about it was that I could see everything I owned all at once. It was a winnowing down to the totally essential. I didn't have internet. I would listen to the radio. I wrote a lot of letters. I miss the shed!"

Cline has since moved back to California and now lives alone in LA. In between writing The Girls and The Guest, she published a book of short stories called Daddy inspired by the post-Weinstein downfall of an entire cohort of men, with particular focus on their self-justifications.

In 2017 she had to deal with the messy and upsetting business of an ex-boyfriend, Chaz Reetz-Laiolo, suing her for copyright infringement, claiming sections of The Girls drew from a screenplay of his that she had accessed on their shared computer. A judge dismissed the suit, and Cline characterised the relationship as "abusive" and the lawsuit as a "total assault". (Reetz-Laiolo denied any allegations of physical abuse.)

The legal action wasted a lot of her time, energy and focus. For years, The Guest was a work-in-progress, only without a great deal of progress – a project she repeatedly picked up and put down again. She had been inspired in part by The Swimmer, a short story by John Cheever in which an apparently conventional tale of a man at a suburban pool party takes a sudden surreal plunge towards something much more terrifying. "And there's no explanation," says Cline. "There's just this horrible hurtling sense that you have landed in a nightmare and your life is gone. In what way did you waste it? That story is so harrowing to me."

Cline calls the long gestation period of The Guest normal for the way she writes novels, a process of bumping up against the initial idea countless times. "A novel is so long haul, you have to psych yourself up for it. You have to trick yourself into writing a novel, ease into it." In the early stages, she says, a lot of the thinking happens "in the corner of my eye. OK, the novel's there, but I'm not going to freak myself out too much by going to work on it. I'll write a little bit; keep loose notes. Allow myself to sneak up on it a little."

Meanwhile, it's important to participate in the world. "You just have to live! You have to be a human being!" There is almost no such thing as procrastination, says Cline; everything is useful, even reading the Daily Mail. She bursts out laughing. "As a record of our culture's deepest fears and deepest obsessions, it's a totally fascinating document. I find it really moving in a way."

Moving?

"Or I can get a lot out of reading about this horrific thing that is happening and then the next article is six foods to eat if you never want to get cancer and die! Or these are the rules we have about who's a winner and who's a loser. I just find humans so interesting."

She carries into her reading the same curiosity she brings to her writing, plus something else, a distancing technique that allows for all sorts of possibilities in the face of injury. "I'm not interested in colluding over a character's head about how we're so much better than they are," she says. Passing judgment in that way isn't helpful. She is merely observing; collecting data; sharing her findings. There is, of course, "a place for moral judgment in society". Cline smiles. "But fiction writers are not my preferred enforcers."

*Emma Cline will discuss The Guest at a Guardian Live online event on Thursday. Book tickets at membership.theguardian.com/events*

MICHELLE GROSKOPF/THE GUARDIAN



Connie Converse in June 1958

THE MUSICK GROUP, HEROIC CITIES LLC

# Vanishing act

## The beguiling story of a 1950s New York folk singer who disappeared

*Fiona Sturges*

IN 2010, WRITER AND MUSICIAN Howard Fishman went to a Christmas party at a friend's house where, not knowing many people, he took to scanning the bookshelves. As he did so, a song called Talkin' Like You (Two Tall Mountains) came on the stereo that, he recalls, "swallowed me. The party froze. The room disappeared." Set against a backdrop of gentle guitar picking, it was sung by a woman, plaintively and without affectation, about "a place they called Lonesome" where everything, from the nearby brook to the pigs in the yard, reminds her of an absent lover. Fishman sought out the host to ask who was singing, and she told him about Connie Converse, who recorded songs in her kitchen in 1950s Greenwich Village, and whose musical talents had gone largely unrecognised in her lifetime.

Fishman went straight from the party to a record store where he bought Converse's How Sad, How Lovely, an album compiled by latterday fans in 2009. He wanted to hear more from this musician whose lyrics brimmed with poetic intimacy and whose lo-fi, homespun style sounded decades ahead of its time. Thus began a 13-year obsession, yielding a play based on Converse's life; an album, by Fishman, of songs that Converse left behind in manuscript form; and now, in To Anyone Who Ever Asks, a rigorously researched and heartfelt biography.

The narrative of the musical genius who goes unrecognised for decades, only to be discovered later on, is an irresistible one. The folk singer Vashti Bunyan, who gave up performing in the late 1960s, thought herself a failure until the 00s when she learned that copies of her debut album were changing hands for thousands of dollars. The 2012 documentary Searching for Sugarman detailed the fate of the Detroit musician Sixto Rodriguez, who was once touted as the new Dylan but whose career failed to take off. Except that it did, much later, in South Africa where, unbeknown to him, he had sold half a million albums.

For Converse, there has been no such renaissance, though her story comes with an unexpected coda. In 1961, frustrated with her lack of success, she left New York and moved to Michigan. There, Converse worked on a novel, engaged in political activism and took a series of academic jobs, though, as time passed, she seemed to lose herself. She was drinking heavily, co-workers complained about her poor personal hygiene and there was a fractious period where she lived with her brother and his wife. In 1974, a few days after her 50th birthday, she packed up her Volkswagen Beetle and, leaving fond but cryptic letters to loved ones, abandoned her job and her home. She was never seen again.

Fishman has his work cut out filling in the blanks in Converse's life, which accounts for the book's many narrative detours. As well as chasing down every living acquaintance and relative, no matter how distant, we find him casing old houses and apartment buildings, knocking on neighbours' doors and loitering in graveyards. Not everyone is willing to help. He gets short shrift from Gene Deitch, the illustrator and amateur audio engineer who was the only person to have recorded Converse's songs. Deitch, who was moved by the poignance of her writing, recorded her at his home in Westchester in 1954, though his efforts to help her find a wider audience came to nothing and the pair lost touch.

Fishman gets a warmer reception from Converse's brother, Phil, a political scientist whose testimony and belongings form the backbone of his research. Before Phil's death aged 86 in 2014, the author visited him in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he kept a metal filing cabinet in his garage containing his sister's letters, drawings and recordings. The contents reveal Converse as a polymath: not just a musician but an accomplished illustrator, painter, political cartoonist and essayist.

There is no shortage of evidence pointing to Converse's creative brilliance and Fishman rightly puts her work front and centre. But there is no avoiding the fact that his close readings of her lyrics are based, for the most part, on guesswork. Getting a handle on Converse's motivations and interior life is a near impossible task; perhaps the most certain thing that can be said of her is that she was contradictory. She was valedictorian of her high school class and earned a scholarship to Mount Holyoke College, yet, for reasons no one understood at the time, she dropped out at the end of her sophomore year and moved to New York. She remained unattached throughout her life - unhappily so, according to her letters, though she had lovers, which was unusual for a single woman in the 1950s.

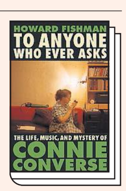
Her correspondence with her brother suggests a desire for recognition, though she never hired an agent or gave a formal concert, instead performing at house parties. Converse, it seems, wanted the impossible: to be feted for her work while remaining invisible. The closest she came to fame was a single performance on Walter Cronkite's Morning Show on CBS (no film or audio footage survives, only photographs).

Fishman is not the first writer to attempt to chronicle the life of Converse and he won't be the last, though his portrait is the most complete so far. Even so, the mystery at the heart of her story - her character; her dreams; her demise, if indeed she died and didn't live out her days under an assumed name - remains just that. Her final disappearance was, it appears, entirely consistent with how she lived her life. Converse was, Fishman writes, "unpredictable and inevitable; opaque and mesmerizing; complete and unfinished; and almost unbelievable".

*To buy a copy for £22 go to guardianbookshop.com*

BIOGRAPHY

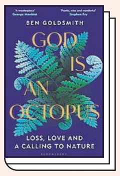
**To Anyone Who Ever Asks**
The Life, Music and Mystery of Connie Converse
*Howard Fishman*
WILDFIRE, £25



## Consoling nature

### A father's search for meaning after tragedy

*Kate Blincoe*



**MEMOIR**
**God Is an Octopus**
Loss, Love and a Calling to Nature
*Ben Goldsmith*
**BLOOMSBURY, £20**

Ben Goldsmith's remarkable memoir begins with his daughter, Iris, swimming into the sea to place her hands on the carcass of a humpback whale, captured by whalers off the island of Bequia in the Caribbean. The powerful image of the "teenage girl in the blood-red water unafraid, tenderly handling the dead monster" illustrates Iris's reverence for the natural world as well as being a portent of tragedy.

In 2019, the gentle rhythm of a normal summer's day was shattered by Iris's death in an accident on the family farm in Somerset. Goldsmith's world was thrown into disarray. He recounts those final, awful hours in quiet, careful prose that nevertheless lays bare their gut-wrenching agony.

The resulting shock and grief fuel a relentless pursuit to understand *why*. He seeks out other grieving parents. Their conversations are moving and enlightening and show the repercussions of loss over decades. He explores different religious beliefs about death and the afterlife, even engaging with a psychic medium. Finally, he experiences an intense ayahuasca ritual, the visions furnishing him with the intriguing title of the book.

Inspired by Iris's sense of connection to all living things, Goldsmith pursues the restorative, healing aspects of nature. Plunging into the cold water of a pond he notes, "I felt nature enveloping me, reassuring me, beneath a sun that shone hot even as it approached the conclusion of its long, daily descent westwards". The natural world is where Goldsmith feels closest to his daughter. Gorgeous descriptions of her merge with captivating nature writing. Iris remains vividly alive through his words as he recounts her childhood and the time they spent together, as well as the history of the landscape in which she grew up.

There is another loss at the heart of this book. Goldsmith describes the terrifying rate at which plants and animals are disappearing from our countryside. He is already known as a strong and credible voice for conservation and, in particular, as a campaigner for rewilding. In the year that follows Iris's death, he becomes even more passionate about reversing the decline of species and habitats.

A visit to Avalon Marshes shows how land can be "rewetted", and he also takes inspiration from the experience of his friend Isabella Tree, author of Wilding, at the Knepp Castle estate. Goldsmith is an advocate for the reintroduction of beavers, which can play a role in the creation of wetlands but are often held up as the symbol of rewilding's potential for disruption. Instead, he argues that they "know what they are doing. Everything we are told presupposes that nature is chaos while we bring order. In fact, the opposite is true; nature is order, while we bring chaos." This makes perfect sense; nature is the ultimate balm in the aftermath of a catastrophe.

Goldsmith begins to take action on his own land, and the alchemy of rewilding becomes his obsession and redemption. First comes the "rewiggling" of a human-made drainage ditch, encouraging the curves that make for a healthy stream. When it fills with rain for the first time, he's greeted by "an unfamiliar sense of joy that coyly hovered, tentatively awaiting permission to wash over me". Next comes the ripping out of fences, and a poignant sense of how much Iris would have loved to ride her pony over the newly opened-up landscape.

There are now a number of monuments that celebrate Iris's life. There is a circle of stones to mark where she died, the Iris prize to recognise young environmentalists and, of course, this book, which will bring comfort and hope to anyone experiencing grief. Most beautiful of all, perhaps, is the almost magical yet very real resurgence of wildlife on the family farm. With love and time, nature regenerates, forgotten creatures return and wild irises can grow.

*To buy a copy for £17.60 go to guardianbookshop.com*



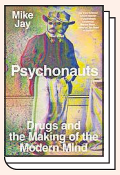
Wetlands on the Avalon Marshes, Somerset

NEIL JUGGINS/STOCKIMO/ALAMY

## The high life

### The drug-takers who changed history

*Thomas W Hodgkinson*



**SCIENCE**
**Psychonauts**
Drugs and the Making of the Modern Mind
*Mike Jay*
**YALE, £20**

Before writing this review, I got hold of some tiny canisters of nitrous oxide, filled a balloon or two and, watched by my bemused wife, breathed in the gas. It gave me no more of a buzz than smoking a cigarette. I must have been doing it wrong because, according to Mike Jay's compelling history of narcotic self-exploration, it was when the chemist Humphry Davy began inhaling this newly discovered gas in Bristol in 1799, sometimes in the company of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, that he started a revolution. While high, Davy declared that "Nothing exists but thoughts!"

This insight wasn't new, of course. Bishop Berkeley had made it the cornerstone of his philosophy. Yet for Davy, it felt transformative. Another laughing gas lover, the psychologist William James, later observed that there are two types of people: the once-born and the twice-born. The once-born accept the world as it is and get on with it. The twice-born have a life-changing insight or vision. Some become questing, drug-ingesting "psychonauts" as a result - and it is they who form the focus of this fascinating book.

The medical applications of drugs have sometimes become clear only after their use in less formal settings. After Davy's experiments, for instance, nitrous oxide first became a staple of vaudeville turns. Volunteers would breathe the gas, then caper about, while onlookers tittered. Then in Connecticut in 1844, a dentist named Horace Wells, who happened to be in one of these audiences, saw a participant injure himself but experience no pain. Wells introduced nitrous oxide into his work and thereby helped inaugurate a new era in anaesthetics. Similarly, after Sigmund Freud's self-experimentation with cocaine in Austria in the 1880s, one of his colleagues adopted the drug as a numbing agent in eye surgery.

The reputation of drugs and their ability to shock has ebbed and flowed. Jay smartly signals one of the sea changes with reference to Sherlock Holmes. In the 1890s, Arthur Conan Doyle presented his detective's cocaine habit as the exotic eccentricity of a bohemian. Then, in 1904, he said primly that Watson had "weaned" the great man from his "drug mania". One reason for the shift in tone was that Collier's, the company publishing Conan Doyle's stories in the United States, was in the midst of an anti-drugs crusade. Broadly, Jay presents the 19th century as "the age of the individual", in which almost everyone had a jolly time trying out new substances, and the 20th century as "the progressive era", when things got serious.

Jay also believes that drug experimentation facilitated the birth of "the modern mind". But there's no rigorous analysis of what this might mean. Jean Lorrain's ether-fuelled stories in the 1890s, we're told, "anticipate" the stream of consciousness approach to fiction. Cubism and surrealism arose within a generation. But was this coincidence or influence? Certainly, Jay can name artists who were inspired by drug-taking. Many, of course, weren't. Later he asserts: "The modernist art and culture of the generation to come, with its fractured and unfamiliar perspectives, dedicated itself to breaking through the veil of everyday reality to a world of pure experience." But this wasn't all modernists tried to do, nor did all modernism try to do it.

Nevertheless, the author's central point, that the history of experimentation is more venerable and complex than many assume, is clearly right and not something you get taught at school. The complexities continue: the UK government recently announced its intention to criminalise possession of nitrous oxide. On the other hand, recent research into various drugs traditionally seen as illicit shows their promise in treating a range of mental-health conditions. Some even talk of a "psychedelic renaissance". If that's so, it won't only be the psychonauts who have been twice-born, but the drugs themselves.

*To buy a copy for £17.60 go to guardianbookshop.com*

# A new leaf

## Literary inspiration for a woman starting again

*Katy Guest*

**MEMOIR**
**A Life of One's Own**
Nine Women Writers Begin Again
*Joanna Biggs*
**W&N, £18.99**




"Around the time I realised I didn't want to be married any more, I started visiting Mary Wollstonecraft's grave," begins this unusual blend of memoir, criticism and literary biography by the journalist Joanna Biggs. Finding herself newly single, and her mother fading from Alzheimer's, Biggs might have turned to friends, or drink, or late-night posts on social media.

Instead, she looked for comfort in the lives and works of Wollstonecraft, George Eliot, Zora Neale Hurston, Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Sylvia Plath, Toni Morrison and Elena Ferrante. She yearned for freedom, but didn't know what it should look like. "Who do you tell," she writes, "when you start to feel these things?" As she learns from her literary heroines, Wollstonecraft's grave is not the worst place to turn when life is in a spin.

One of Biggs's reasons for writing the book, as its subtitle implies, is to convince herself that the false start of her marriage doesn't mean it's the end. "I needed to remind myself that starting out on my own again halfway through life is possible, has been possible for others – and that this sort of life can have beauty in it," she writes.

It may seem strange to look to Plath, who took her own life at the age of 30, or Hurston, who died unappreciated and poor. But what Biggs is really seeking is a template for a different kind of living; evidence that women can break the domestic mould and tell the tale – even if they might not always live.

At first, she seems disappointed – in "Eliot's reluctance to speak up"; in Hurston, for not writing about race. Discovering De Beauvoir's casual cruelty to some of her lovers, she declares, "I wanted my heroine back."

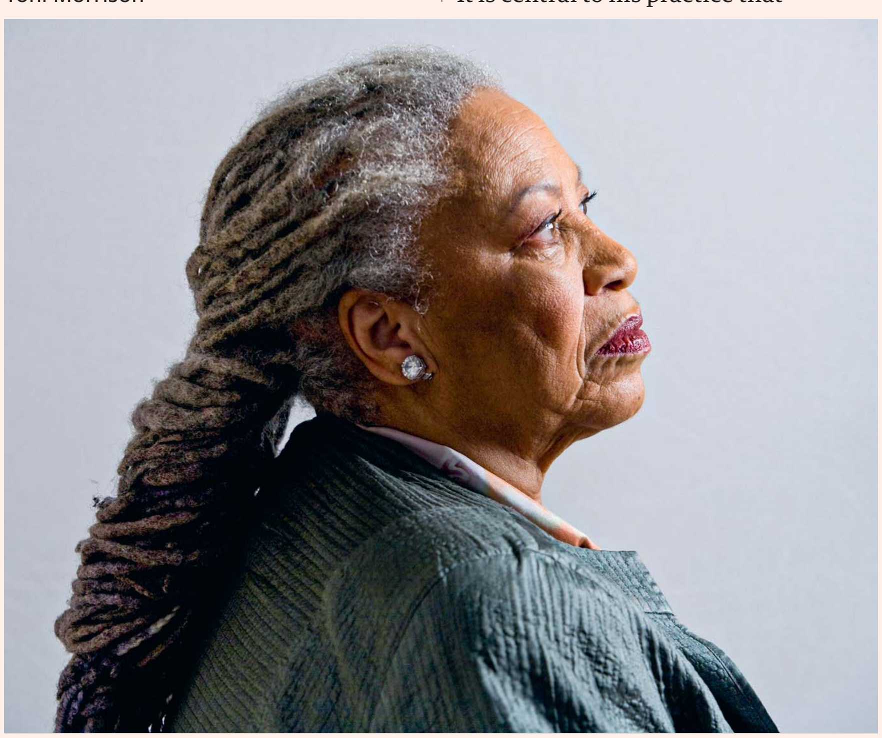
And it's hard not to be shocked by the chasm between some of these women and contemporary feminist values. De Beauvoir said there had been "one undoubted success" in her life: her relationship with Sartre. Plath commented that one of Hughes's female characters "should delight to be raped on the floor". Several of the writers went to pieces and turned to drugs when their men left them. One is inclined to agree with Angela Carter, who reportedly asked: "Why is a nice girl like Simone wasting her time sucking up to a boring old fart like J-P?"

Biggs seems to take a more jaded view of marriage, hardly crediting that any woman might survive it with her independence and spirit intact. Writing about Woolf, she reveals, "I am interested in marriages that are set up in a way that supports … the happiness of both people in it." (Shouldn't that be all of them?) Of De Beauvoir and Sartre, she ponders "that delicate, perhaps utopian balance – togetherness not encroaching on independence". (De Beauvoir didn't see a contradiction.) Her own divorce enables her to "spend Sunday morning in bed with a novel or eat cereal for dinner or walk around naked". What, one wonders, was stopping her?

In this collection of writers, Biggs has chosen women who put their own lives into their writing – as has she. It has been unfashionable to read the life as part of the work but Biggs sees that, for these women, they were inextricable. They lived in ways that enabled them to write, were often punished for it, and kept going.

She also celebrates the way in which those who come after can thrive "when our lives don't fit conventional shapes" – as Wollstonecraft did for Eliot, Eliot did for Woolf, Woolf for Plath, and so on. I don't respond in precisely the same way as Biggs does to these writers, and perhaps that is what makes them great. "I never thought I could be Simone de Beauvoir, but I've always known she existed," she writes, "and at times when I've been utterly lost, clinging desperately to the crumbling fragments of my life, that knowledge has been enough."

*To buy a copy for £16.71 go to guardianbookshop.com*



Pulitzer prize winner Toni Morrison

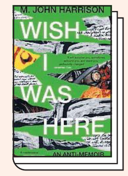
TIMOTHY FADEK/CORBIS/GETTY

# Life, refracted

## A highly original writer's 'anti-memoir'

*Nina Allan*

**MEMOIR**
**Wish I Was Here**
*M John Harrison*
**SERPENTS TAIL, £16.99**




Michael John Harrison was born two months after VE Day and grew up in semi-rural Warwickshire. His father was an engineer and not much of a reader; the sparsely eclectic selection of books in the Harrison household reflected that fact and included staples such as Charles Kingsley's The Water-Babies and a stack of military biographies.

"Monty" Harrison died when Mike was 13, taking that whole world with him and with it the sense of stability, even staidness, that characterised his childhood. "I'd bought into writing as an escape route," Harrison says, "rather than an honest admission of what I saw and experienced." That was soon to change.

Harrison first began publishing his stories in science fiction magazines towards the end of the 1960s. Even then he was an outlier, and found himself unjustly neglected outside the sphere of fantasy while being ignored within it – at least at first – for his refusal to conform. Throughout his writing life, Harrison has refused the generic, escapist iterations of fantasy and science fiction as "easy things to think, a waste of the power of the big visionary-apocalyptic machine". It is central to his practice that novels be recognised not as immersive experiences, illusory spaces to inhabit, but for the artificial constructs they are. They aren't alternative worlds, but the work of a writer in our own.

If Harrison rejects story as a mode of writing, he is equally ambivalent about the idea of memoir, which, he insists, can only ever be another form of fiction, an idea of self that is constructed after the fact. It is this treacherous divide between what is experienced and what is remembered that is the true subject of Wish I Was Here, a searching meditation on the writing life that Harrison has termed an anti-memoir and that might equally be described as an album of dissociated snapshots, a flickering-past of images as glimpsed through the window of a moving car.

The scenes most keenly recalled relate to the decade Harrison spent rock climbing in the Peak District, a period immortalised in his 1989 novel Climbers. That time and place is his lost idyll, or to use his own term, a "dream estate". It is the domain of an alternative self he names Map Boy, "always out in front, picking things up, putting them down; he was always in the lead". Map Boy is the renegade, the easy rider, the bolder, wilder persona emblematic of the life the author yearns for but is unable to fully embrace.

"Perhaps the worst discovery of all is that you don't even have to be very good at something to ache from missing it," Harrison reflects. Fortunately for us, he has had to settle for being a writer. After 50 years of "staring grimly at things and writing them down", Harrison's writing is still vital and still angry, still engaged in the now, still fighting for purchase, and Wish I Was Here is a literary statement one feels he has been working towards his entire life.

"File an observation until its context is lost, then treat it as a found object. Something to be misappropriated from yourself, something levered out of its authentic moment. The notes know there are only inauthentic moments, and moments are all we have," Harrison reminds himself in one of his notebooks. There is fascinating autobiographical material to be found here for those who wish to dig for it, though as with Harrison's 2020 novel The Sunken Land Begins to Rise Again, what Wish I Was Here does triumphantly is to capture the feeling of living in the 21st century with all its anxieties. Against the uncertainty, the writing; the restless thrum of art, like the ghostly flight of the barn owl glimpsed at dusk, wondrous and self-defining and defiant.

*To buy a copy for £14.95 go to guardianbookshop.com*



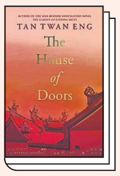
LLOYD SMITH/WRITER PICTURES

# Tragedy in the tropics

Somerset Maugham appears as a flawed actor in a colonial morality play inspired by his classic short story

*Xan Brooks*

**The House of Doors**
*Tan Twan Eng*
**CANONGATE, £20**




On the night of 23 April 1911, Ethel Proudlock took her husband's revolver and shot a man dead at her house in Malaysia. She claimed the victim, William Steward, had arrived unannounced and attempted to kiss her. But her trial pointed to a deeper story, one that lifted the lid on the culture that spawned it. Proudlock was a member of Kuala Lumpur's expat community, a conservative outpost nicknamed Cheltenham-on-the-Equator. Her rumoured infidelity, combined with her concealed mixed-race background, made her a pariah. The killing was seen as almost the least of her crimes.

The Proudlock scandal would later be refitted to form the basis for The Letter, an acclaimed short story by W Somerset Maugham, that pitiless chronicler of so much human frailty. It now provides the prompt for Tan Twan Eng's The House of Doors, an ambitious, elaborate fiction about fictions that beats back to the humid heyday of empire and instals the bestselling author as a flawed player in the drama. "We will be remembered through our stories," Maugham declares at one point. He speaks with the bland self-assurance of a man who invariably writes the final draft.

In print, on the page, Maugham presented himself as anonymous and dispassionate; a confidante in the shadows recording the confessions of others. The truth was more knotty. At the time of his travels through the Federated Malay States, he was borderline bankrupt, in flight from a sham marriage and accompanied by his rackety lover, Gerald Haxton. Tan takes the famous writer - "Willie" to his friends - and folds him amid the transplanted high society of Penang, a guest at the home of well-to-do Robert and Lesley Hamlyn. Lesley disapproves of Maugham's lifestyle but sympathises with his plight. It is she who will tell him what befell Ethel Proudlock.

The House of Doors is Tan's first novel since 2012's Booker-shortlisted The Garden of Evening Mists and shares many of its themes. It's a book about memory, loss and cultural dissonance; a high-flown tragedy that sideslips through the decades and passes the narrative baton between Lesley and Maugham. While Tan - born in Penang of Straits Chinese descent - is deliberately writing in the voice of the oppressor, he generally does so with care, conscious of the limits of his characters' language and worldview. If colonial Malaysia is a pastiche of middle-class England, his drama is its costumed morality play.

Like Maugham, though, Tan's tale carries a good deal of luggage. The sheer weight of its interests sometimes slows it down. The House of Doors is by turns a portrait of the artist in crisis, a meditation on how and why we tell stories and a heated courtroom drama, spotlighting the Proudlock affair. It's also a political saga of sorts, charting Lesley's journey towards self-empowerment and embrace of social activism. Tan tinkers with the timeframe to align the Proudlock trial with the arrival in Penang of Sun Yat-sen, another true-life figure, who dreams of overthrowing the emperor and establishing a republic in China. Sun, in his way, is as much a storyteller as Maugham. But his revolutionary adventure feels undercooked and imported. We view it via Lesley, the white colonial wife, and her vision of events is partial and obscured.

Revitalised by his travels through the far east, in 1926 Maugham published a collection of stories, The Casuarina Tree, which outraged his hosts and restored his bank balance. His straight-backed formal prose framed the emotional tumult of the English expats, exposing a colonial society that was provisional and precarious; stitched on to the tropics and at risk of collapse. The secret of finding good stories, Tan has the author explain to a local reporter, comes from travelling widely and gaining people's trust: "A man is more willing to open up to you once you've revealed something personal, something shameful about yourself." But his careful exchange was really a bait-and-switch scam. In practice, Maugham exploited the secrets of his subjects while keeping his own forever out of print.

## Tan writes as Maugham did, in a descriptive high style that focuses on the tales people tell

No doubt he'd have bridled at how Tan paints him here. He's as compromised and contorted as anyone in his fiction: struggling with a stammer and presenting a public front to the world; lugging his monogrammed cases from one rest stop to the next. In all other respects, though, he'd probably approve of the story and hear his own voice in its pages. Tan writes as Maugham did, almost self-consciously so, in a descriptive high style that focuses on the tales people tell and how they look when they tell them. Smiles variously wither and blot. Residues of sadness stain faces. Casual expressions are draped. If Tan's antiquated constructions call attention to themselves, I think that's partly the point. Everyone in this drama is wearing an ill-fitting mask. Sooner or later they are liable to unhook and slip loose.

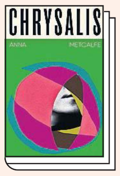
*To buy a copy for £17.60 go to guardianbookshop.com*

# Follow me

## An influencer's tale of transformation

*Daisy Hildyard*

**Chrysalis**
*Anna Metcalfe*
GRANTA, £14.99




In an essay on weightlifting, Kathy Acker describes the process of gradually building muscle as something that forces a confrontation with the limits of the body, "with chaos, with my own failure or a form of death". What she describes would not be recognised by the unnamed protagonist of Anna Metcalfe's Chrysalis, who takes up bodybuilding as a means of asserting control. The novel focuses on a period of transition as this young woman emerges from a difficult childhood and an abusive relationship. She quits her job, sculpts a beautiful and powerful body, eats clean, and develops her own meditation technique. Her skin takes on a hallowed but very literal glow. She starts to post videos and images of herself on social media and acquires a following. The videos, which are made for high-speed playback, show her statuesque body, surrounded by plants, often outdoors, holding itself exquisitely still for hours at a time.

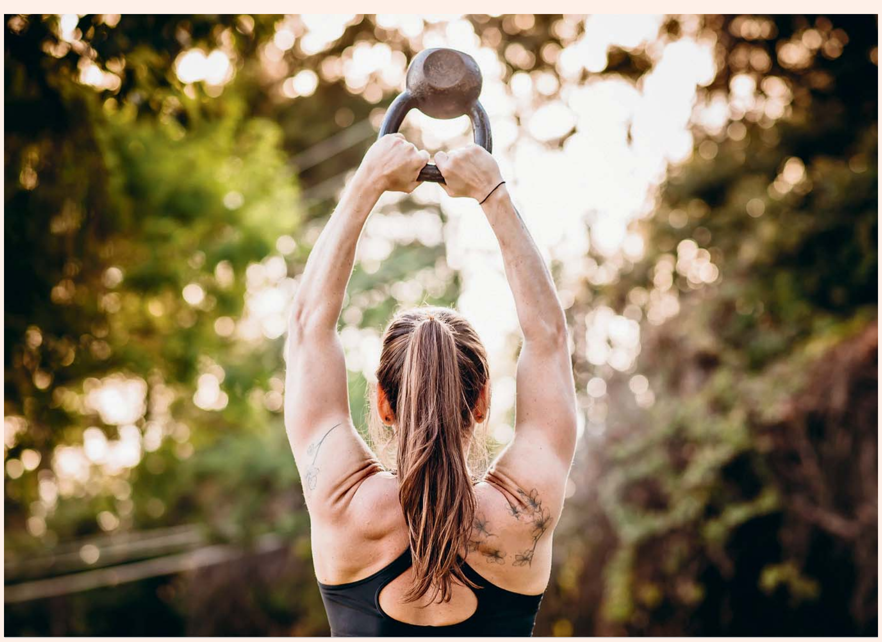
Metcalfe has previously published short stories, and was recently named on Granta magazine's Best of Young British Novelists list. Chrysalis, her first novel, is told across three narratives that describe her protagonist's transformation from three distanced points of view. At the gym she meets Elliot, a lonely workaholic. She is increasingly estranged from her isolated mother, Bella. Susie, a former colleague, becomes her flatmate for a while. Elliot, Bella and Susie are all painfully vulnerable and chronically lonely. There is no framing device, no pretext for their telling us what they know about this woman, and the background is so lightly sketched that it feels neutralised. Elliot lives in an anonymous urban area, a poignant sunset skyline seen through the gym's glass wall. Well into the story, this somewhat abruptly becomes Sheffield.

Elliot is a freelancer and his "big jobs" define him, but the passages describing his work habits make no direct reference to what he does. Susie's hinterland is also only glimpsed, and through the book we uncover much about why the protagonist becomes an influencer, but little sense of how. In a novel concerned with curated displays of experience, this wonky, haphazard cleansing of context works. It heightens the forcefield around its subject, giving her that ultrafiltered, hyperreal plausibility that is influencer capital. I felt that I could see her large stilled form, the tree stirring behind her in her overgrown garden, and could understand why a person might follow her - the "cool and pleasant feeling" that she can induce. The absence of context also feeds the feeling that something is seriously amiss. "Cut yourself off," she urges her followers. "Do you really need the people in your life, or do they need you?"

Elliot, Bella and Susie need her, in surprisingly similar ways. They sound alike too, their language limpid and eerie, a queasy wellness blend of psychoanalysis and internet niceness that has them speak of transitional objects, optimisation, flow, authenticity, containment. The book as a whole made me think about how much we want to talk about ourselves, and how basic our resources are. It doesn't have a particular thesis on online selfhood, though - it's all in the telling, which is gripping and subtle. Small pieces of information are drip fed to the reader, each moment viewed and reviewed across the different narratives. It feels fizzy, with all these pops of observation on the move.

Over time, we come to see several different points of origin for the woman's drive to metamorphosis. She needs to look big, strong and still. She seems to think a lot about becoming a plant. Han Kang's The Vegetarian is a clear influence, and I also thought of the end of Richard Powers' The Overstory - female characters, merging with plants, find respite in obliteration. Woman-becomes-plant is an old story, but there's been a recent flowering. The essayist Elvia Wilk, writing on what she calls the "New Weird", has described these fictions of "rooting oneself and becoming plant" as "a vicious claim to life" at this present point in history, in a world catastrophically obsessed with progress. A heavy and affecting sense of impending horror hangs over Chrysalis, but the conclusion pulls back from that and arrives at something more fragmentary, sadly ordinary in a way. Different things happen to different characters; there's a messiness, as though the drama has come into contact with its limits. The book is bigger and stronger for it.

*To buy a copy for £13.19 go to guardianbookshop.com*



Bodybuilding in Chrysalis

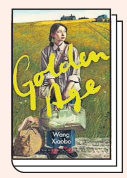
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# Sex, death and politics

## A Cultural Revolution classic - in English at last

*Rahul Raina*

**Golden Age**
*Wang Xiaobo, translated by Yan Yan*
PENGUIN CLASSICS, £18.99




During the Cultural Revolution, children killed parents, lives were broken irrevocably, millions were beaten and starved to death - and Wang Xiaobo wrote an erotic comic novel about it all.

Now one of China's most popular modern writers, Wang was completely unknown when he released Golden Age in Taiwan in 1992; now it is available for the first time in complete form in a sparky, earthy translation by the young Chinese American translator Yan Yan. Wang wrote prolifically, torrentially, for the next five years, scandalising the authorities and titillating the public, until his death in 1997, when his novels moved from black-market editions to more freely disseminated, semi-sanctioned copies.

Married to the prominent sexologist and LGBTQ+ rights campaigner Li Yinhe, he spent the mid-80s in Pittsburgh as a postgrad student, returning to China as a part-time history professor, and this may explain his writing's mass appeal - a hip, jaded insider-outsider, far removed from the reverential, government-approved tragic realist school of Cultural Revolution novels (noble parents, infant mortality, sacrificial animal metaphors). Readers were shocked, outraged, appalled - and have since devoured his work in their millions, just as they have continually asked how it was allowed to be published at all.

"A little bit of criticism here and there sharpens one's moral compass." So says Wang's stand-in protagonist Wang Er, who is sent down to rural Yunnan in the late 1960s and begins his story on his 21st birthday. He is a boy of "average talent, dexterous hands, and a very muddled character". His days involve hunting for extra food, sexual liaisons, menial subsistence farm work and being publicly abused to foster a sense of community. It sounds like heaven. Wang agrees, partly sincerely - life during the Cultural Revolution may be "a slow, drawn-out process of getting your balls crushed", but it's his Golden Age, better than the stultifying, unsurely liberalising, globalising world he haunts in the latter part of the novel.

Wang indulges in sex, sensuality and nakedness as a deliberate rejection of bureaucratic Maoism and the young, sexless, amorphously green-jacketed Red Guards that formed the shock troops of the early Cultural Revolution, with their denunciatory posters and executions of the traitorously old doctors, scientists and professors who had betrayed the People's Revolution. One can only wonder what Xi Jinping, a year younger than Wang and with a similarly brutal young adulthood in Shaanxi, made of this novel.

Wang's female partner in crime, the doctor Chen Qingyang, is told to "suffer a little more indignity" in her struggle sessions, as she enjoys showing off her beauty too much. A sense of tragicomic futility and going-through-the-motions abound, tempered with a few hysterically bloody execution-beatings.

In the second and third parts, Wang is a biology professor, at first unhappily married, then more unhappily divorced, "lackadaisical at work, and reprehensible in everyday life". Here, Wang the author perfects his part scatological satire, part deeply moving exposé of the brutality of his youth, to portray life in the emotionally deadened, economically dying 1980s communist state. You can feel the weight of every one of the 20 years it took Wang - who was an eyewitness to Tiananmen Square -

to birth the book. The emotional centre of the novel, the suicide of a professor during the Cultural Revolution, his family keeping silent vigil over his brains lacing the uncleaned Beijing pavement, is a masterpiece of understatement.

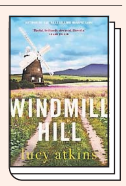
This is frank, irreverent, bawdy, freewheeling, bizarrely moving writing about politics and sex and death. Yes, maybe a little too much of the narrative describes shapely buttocks and perfect breasts and inopportune postmortem erections. Yes, it can be a bit Confessions of a Sent-Down Chinese Student at times. But Wang is a major, epochal Chinese writer, the vast majority of his work untranslated, and if there is going to be a second cold war, with Yellow Scares, denunciations, state-led deniable pogroms of east Asians from western public life, then it's exactly this kind of book - deeply human, gloriously alive - that we can wave in the face of the social media panopticon state. It won't matter, of course. We are herd creatures. We have mortgages to pay. You don't want to be cancelled, do you?
*To buy a copy for £16.71 go to guardianbookshop.com*

## Haunted by the past

### Secrets and scandal down the ages

*Patrick Gale*

**Windmill Hill**
*Lucy Atkins*
QUERCUS, £16.99




Lucy Atkins's follow-up to her fourth novel, Magpie Lane, will please that book's many admirers. Once again she serves up vivid, slightly unhinged characters, a plot tangle worthy of a kitten in a knitting bag and a richly atmospheric backdrop. In this case the setting, an ancient windmill and cottage on the South Downs, is brought to life in such detail - from its trapdoors and untrustworthy upper storeys, to its damp patches, ghosts and secret tunnel - that it threatens to upstage the humans who live in it.

In the present day these are two apparently mismatched women in hiding from the wider world. Astrid, the mill's owner, was once an RSC star in the vein of Judi Dench and Glenda Jackson: regal and commanding, a noted Lady Macbeth. Her career was cut short by scandal when she was framed by her ambitious actor husband in cahoots with an abusive Hollywood director. Since being tabloid-hounded into hiding, she has clung to her beloved, impractical retreat, eking out a sparse living offering haunted house B&B and spirit writing to wealthy eccentrics, working as a paid mourner to the unloved, and making do on less and less. Her companion in sordid chaos is Mrs Baker (not her real name), a sturdily capable woman in hiding from a dangerous criminal husband. She entered Astrid's life as her cleaner, but is now bound to her by deep loyalty, shared secrets and a grudging respect. Woven through their story is that of Constance Battiscombe, a free-spirited Bloomsbury-style aristocrat who once filled the mill and cottage with scandalously free-loving friends, then remained tied to the place by tragedy.

The present-day spine of the narrative follows Astrid - confused, penniless and suffering from neglected heart trouble - as she journeys to Scotland to prevent her film star ex-husband once again blackening her name in a memoir. But this is constantly interrupted by strands of backstory as the particulars of the 1960s scandal and the more recent "Awful Incident", involving Mrs Baker's murderous husband and some dressmaking scissors, are slowly let slip. Atkins relishes the details of Astrid and Mrs Baker's odd menage - their mad fashion choices, the multiple dachshunds, the ingenious mechanisms by which the dogs are hoisted from floor to floor. She delights in their bourbon-muddied arguments and grimly parsimonious meals, and as Astrid shamelessly charms and muddles her way across the country with her dachshunds-ate-my-hearing-aids excuses and ready empathy, it's easy to imagine the book adapted for screen as a festive vehicle for a pair of national treasures.

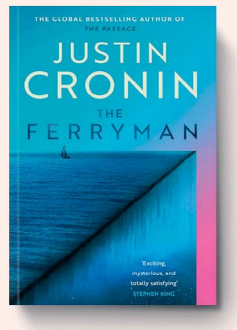
If there's a problem, it's one of balance. The chaotic present, all bad backs and geriatric unworldliness, feels far more realised than the sense that Astrid was once an important actor. She was at her professional peak at a time when British theatre was blazing a trail and reinventing itself, and yet we get little sense of that era. It's also a pity that the more distant historic backstory, in which a domestic tragedy is played out against EF Bensonish conflicts between outraged locals and druidic re-enactors in the woods, is confined to snatches of hoarded correspondence rather than being fleshed out into a full narrative.

But perhaps this is unfair carping. Windmill Hill is enormous fun and Atkins delivers an emotionally satisfying climax, finding ways to plait present and historic elements together and catching up the few characters who deserve it in an extended authorial hug.
*To buy a copy for £13.04 go to guardianbookshop.com*

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

# Science fiction, fantasy and horror

Immortality on a mysterious island; brain chips in near-future Britain; murder among a genetically modified elite; and a dark tale of rivalry. *By Lisa Tuttle*




**The Ferryman**
*Justin Cronin*
ORION, £22

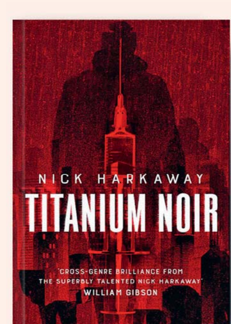
The new novel from the author of The Passage could hardly be more different in tone and setting from that acclaimed horror trilogy. The island of Prospera provides an idyllic existence for the fortunate inhabitants, who display no curiosity about the wider world and accept having no children as the price of immortality: in old age they are ferried to the "Nursery", from which they return, young again and memory-wiped, to start over. The reader is given plenty of hints that there's more to this reality than the characters believe, but there are 500 pages to go before the mind-boggling reveal. That's not the end: Cronin is far too good a writer to hang his compelling tale on a single twist. What lingers in the mind are not so much the turns of plot as the issues explored: about society, human nature, and, above all, what it means to live a good life.

**More Perfect**
*Temi Oh*
SIMON & SCHUSTER, £16.99

In a near-future Britain, a simple operation to insert a chip in the brain allows access to the Panopticon, a network enabling friends to share thoughts and see through each other's eyes. The government is pushing to make it compulsory as a way to end social isolation and prevent crime. For Moremi, suffering from depression and fear of abandonment, it means she need never be alone again; when she falls in love with Orpheus, she can be certain he shares her feelings. But gradually the dark side of the Panopticon, and the coercive ways an authoritarian government will use it, are chillingly revealed. Drawing on ancient Greek myths and modern brain science, this is a plausible, complex vision of the future, a fascinating story that never shies away from the contradictions in human nature.

**Titanium Noir**
*Nick Harkaway*
CORSAIR, £18.99

In Greek mythology, the Titans were the first race and the ancestors of humankind. In Harkaway's seventh novel, they are the new elite: those wealthy enough to afford T7, a genetic therapy that may provide immortality. Each time the body clock is reset, the patient grows in strength and size, while gaining extra years of longevity. When Detective Cal Sounder is sent to investigate a murder, he knows it must have a connection with Titans, who are practically impossible to kill. He's the go-to guy for such sensitive cases - his ex-girlfriend, now turned Titan, is the daughter of the man who discovered T7. But the crime is even more complicated than he imagined, and there are people determined to stop him uncovering the truth. A highly entertaining, satisfying blend of classic detective noir and inventive speculative fiction.




**Looking Glass Sound**
*Catriona Ward*
VIPER, £16.99

A novel about youthful friendships, rivalry, unspeakable crimes and the way memories mutate when dark secrets are revealed, this is probably Ward's most complex and brilliant book yet. It is also about writers who turn life into fiction, and the question of who, if anyone, owns a story. Events are presented from different perspectives, as "the truth" (memoir, true crime) and as fiction. It's difficult to define by genre, but with touches of witchcraft and a building sense of dread, literary horror is the neatest niche. Lovers of Shirley Jackson, Barbara Vine or Patricia Highsmith will adore this intense, psychologically acute, atmospheric thriller.

# 'You ask yourself – how can I help?'

## Ukrainian historian Serhii Plokhy on writing while grieving – and where his country goes from here. *By Charlotte Higgins*




ALICIA CANTER/THE GUARDIAN

Before my first reporting trip to Ukraine, one of my seasoned war correspondent colleagues had two pieces of advice. First, not to miss the delicious coffee and pastries you can find in Kyiv (which is a wonderfully reassuring thing to hear as you head off towards a conflict). Second, that it was absolutely necessary to read Serhii Plokhy's 2015 book The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine. I did, and it unwound 2,500 years of complex, fascinating and often tragic events, all the way from Herodotus's accounts of the ancient Scythians to the Maidan protests in Kyiv a decade ago. Now Plokhy and I are speaking by Zoom – me from London, he from his home near Harvard, where he is professor of Ukrainian history. He's in his study. There are globes on every surface, and antique maps of Ukraine hang on the walls.

Plokhy, 65, is a genial presence – calm, expansive, gently humorous, not given to grandstanding – exactly how you might imagine and want a history professor to be. However, his latest project is anything but conventional historiography. He begins The Russo-Ukrainian War, his new book, by recalling the moment he picked up his phone and checked his emails, early on 24 February last year. He was in Vienna. One email from a Harvard colleague, with whom he'd been discussing the prospect of an all-out invasion, hoped he was OK. "I was not OK," he writes. Aside from anything, his sister and her family were in Zaporizhzhia, the south-eastern city where he'd grown up. By the time he called her, she could already hear the pounding of Russian artillery. He describes how he dressed carefully, that first morning, putting on a shirt and a blazer for a visit to some archives – "to show that I was collected and prepared to carry out my duties, whatever they might be". The book ends with an afterword that pays heartbreaking tribute to his cousin, killed in October near Bakhmut.

History is normally written from the calm, distant purview that a scholar attains when chaotic events have resolved themselves into some recognisable shape or pattern. It is not usually interrupted by grief for a family member killed as a result of those still-unfolding events. At first, he says, he resisted the idea of a book about the invasion, produced during the invasion. To write such a volume would be "to go against the basic principles of the profession". "Our wisdom as historians comes from the fact that we already know how things turned out," he says.

But soon he began to change his mind. History, after all, is a weapon in this conflict. Vladimir Putin's justification for his aggression towards Ukraine is rooted in his (twisted and faulty) understanding of the past. He even wrote a sprawling, inaccurate essay laying out his views in 2021, titled On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians. Plokhy began to feel compelled to fight the Russian president's terrible history writing with good, solid history writing of his own.

"I found myself in the same situation as a lot of Ukrainians," he says. "After the shock passes, you ask yourself: 'OK: how can I help?' And actually a sense of being involved helps you to survive emotionally. Then you think about the kind of help you can offer. You think about [rock musician] Slava Vakarchuk who goes and sings to the troops. You think of the guy who goes to the army recruitment office, takes a rifle and goes for training. You think of the person who buys used cars in the European Union and brings them to the frontline. These people are all part of the war effort. And I felt I could be part of it by utilising the skills that I have as a historian." I wonder how on earth he has managed to be the dispassionate scholar amid the intense, personal turbulence that the Russian invasion of his country has brought. Because he has had to be, he says. "Being a good historian requires me to control my emotions, otherwise I would not be doing my job according to the standard of the field and I would not fight back as effectively as I could," he says.

As soon as Ukraine survived the initial assault, Plokhy knew exactly how to approach the new book: "As a historian, I knew the answers. I mean: I can't tell you – and I don't say in the book – what will happen tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. But the frame that I'm using is to look at this as one of many wars of the disintegration of empire, and from the perspective that the great powers have lost every single war that they have been fighting since 1945, from Korea to Vietnam to Afghanistan."

So has Russia essentially already lost? Is the full-scale invasion of Ukraine a convulsion of a dying empire? "Yes, exactly," he says. "We just don't know how long it will go on,



and what the price will be." Death throes, he points out, can go on for a pretty long time. Russian imperial disintegration began in 1914, he argues, with the outbreak of the first world war - and he points out that "the Ottoman empire, for example, has been in the process of disintegration since the 17th century", with the Balkan wars of the 1990s and the rise of Islamic State, he says, being a part of that slow-flowing story. "So, I'm not prepared to jump to the conclusion that the invasion of Ukraine is the absolutely last chapter of the Russian empire. But I have no doubt that it is an important chapter."

I wonder whether he can foresee the disintegration of the Russian Federation as it is currently constituted - especially in a context where Russia is seemingly recruiting its military disproportionately from its Muslim peoples and peripheral autonomous republics. "The process of disintegration has already started," he replies. "Already Russia doesn't control its constitutional territory" - by which he means that some parts of Ukraine that were formally adopted as part of the Russian Federation last autumn in the wake of the full-scale invasion, such as Kherson, have already been liberated and restored to Ukrainian hands. But yes, he says, republics on the edges of the federation - such as Tuva, Buryatia and Sakha, not to mention Chechnya, are vulnerable. "The longer the war goes on, the stronger the narrative that Russia is using them as cannon fodder."

It is a cruel game to ask a historian to look into the future. But here we are and, as Plokhy himself says, rephrasing Churchill, historians are probably "the worst commentators on contemporary events except for all the others". So what about the Ukrainians' spring counteroffensive, I ask - which, when we speak in the last days of April, is expected any day.

He is not prepared to predict the outcome of that - but whatever happens, it will be crucial, he says. At the extreme end of the spectrum of what the Ukrainian military might achieve is the retaking of the Crimea, about which he seems a great deal more optimistic than many observers (the Russians have built mighty defences on the peninsula, and will surely fight harder for this territory than any other part of illegally annexed Ukraine). If it were achieved, he says, "it could send a shock wave into Moscow in political terms. It would have a major impact on the Ukrainian morale, on Russian morale, and on the morale of Ukraine supporters in the west." On the other hand, if the counteroffensive completely collapses, "the more likely scenario would be a sort of armistice, with Ukraine losing additional territories. That wouldn't mean the end of the war, but it would mean a very different outcome."

Either way, "a lot depends on it". This year started, he says, with "the realisation that things will be decided on the battlefield more than they will be decided at the negotiating table. On the battlefield there were two questions: the outcome of the Russian winter offensive; and the outcome of the Ukrainian spring counteroffensive. We have the answer to the first question. Nothing came out of the Russian offensive." Now the second question is about to be answered. It may prove a turning point for the whole war.

I'm curious about how he sees his book in relation to journalism. "One way to look at it is that a journalist is someone who takes a photograph," he says. "Then along comes the historian and creates a frame, and makes a different kind of meaning from that snapshot of reality." By contrast to the way in which a journalist would approach writing a book about the war, Plokhy takes a good 150 pages to get on to the events of 24 February 2022. Instead, he walks the reader

## 'This may not be the last chapter of the Russian empire – but it's an important one'

back to 1991 (and even earlier), teasing apart the parallel stories of Russian and Ukrainian post-Soviet politics - and in the process, answering some key questions about the past 30 years: why did democracy "take" in Ukraine but not Russia? Why does Ukraine have a post-Soviet history of mass protest and Russia not? How has Ukraine reacted at different times to the pull of Moscow on the one side, and of Nato and the EU on the other?

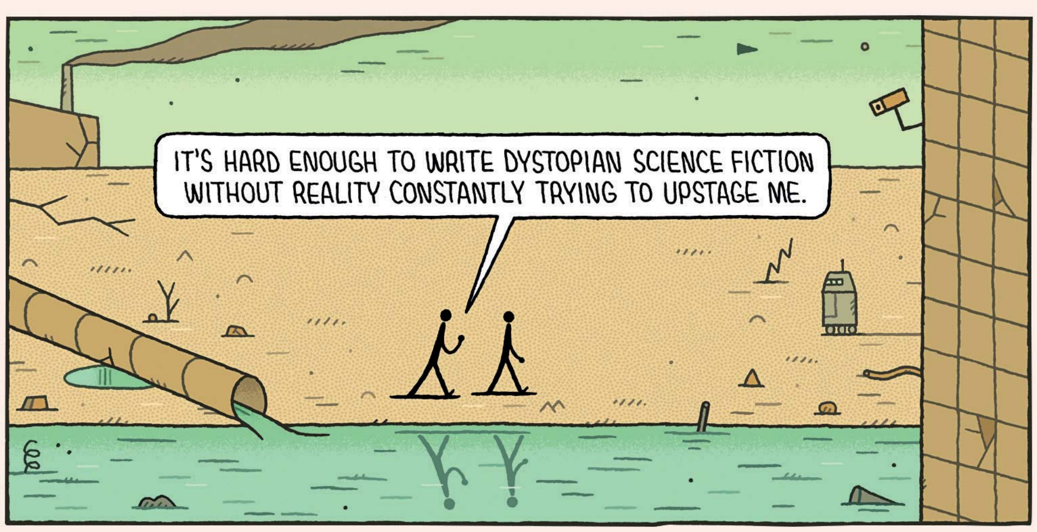
I tell him about an encounter I had in a bookshop in Kyiv, in which the bookseller told me the most common question she has from customers is: "Can you recommend me a book that's not about Ukrainian suffering?" Plokhy laughs, and tells me that Volodymyr Vynnychenko, the first prime minister of Ukraine in 1918-19, said that it was impossible to read Ukrainian history without taking bromide (once used as a sedative) because it was so "painful, horrible, bitter and sad". Is Ukraine condemned to be a buffer state, trapped between east and west, destined for more and more suffering? "You can't change geography," says Plokhy. "You can't change your neighbours. But you can change yourself, and that seems to me what is happening now in the middle of this war." In other words, Ukraine can choose - and is choosing - not to be a no man's land. "When you knock on Nato or the EU's door and it doesn't open right away, it doesn't matter so much if you are prepared to come back and knock again," he says. "That was the case with, say, Poland. It's just a matter of time."

He's on Ukraine's side, without ambiguity or equivocation: is that OK for a historian? Should a scholar be more even-handed? "I don't have a problem being on the side of the country that is trying to save its democracy from the aggression of an increasingly authoritarian, dictatorial state," he tells me. "I don't have a problem being on the side of a victim attacked under a false pretext and a misinterpretation of history - and history is something that I understand.

"Yes, I am on one side. But it's a no-brainer." He moves his camera to show me one of the maps on his office wall, made in 18th-century Italy. Above the Black Sea there's an inscription. It translates as "free Ukraine". And he gives me a big, optimistic grin.

*The Russo-Ukrainian War by Serhii Plokhy will be published by Allen Lane on Tuesday.*

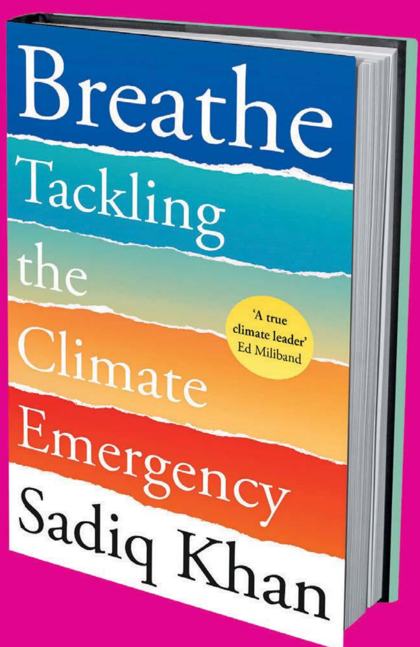
## Tom Gauld



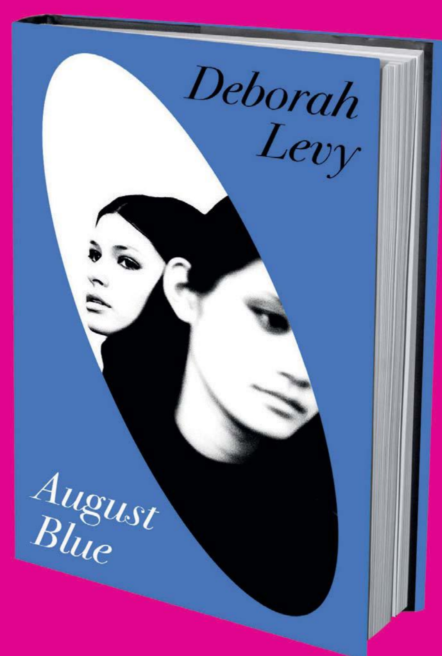
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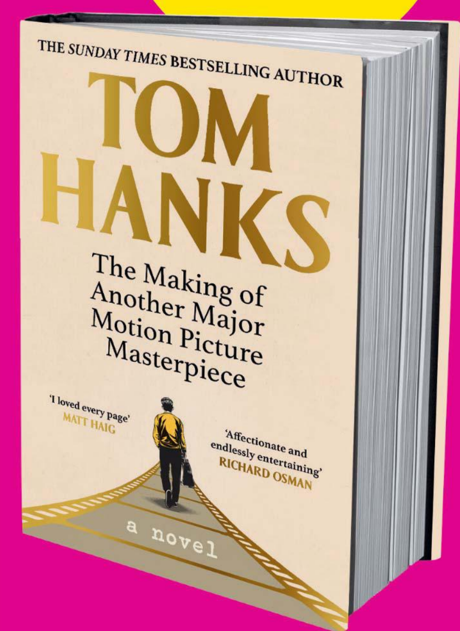
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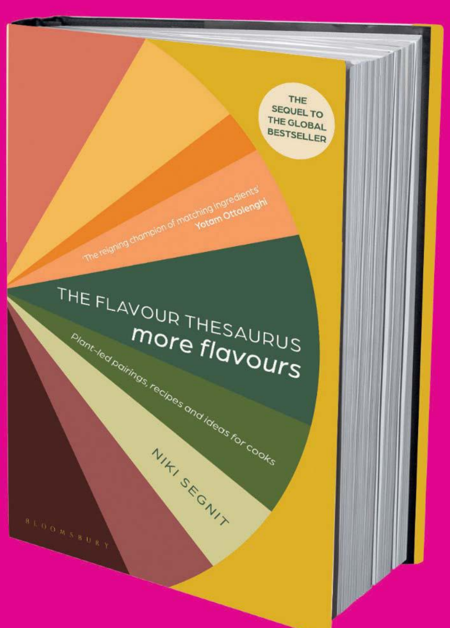

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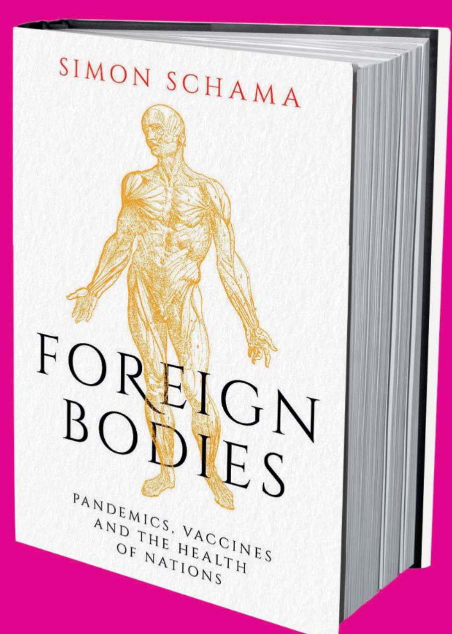

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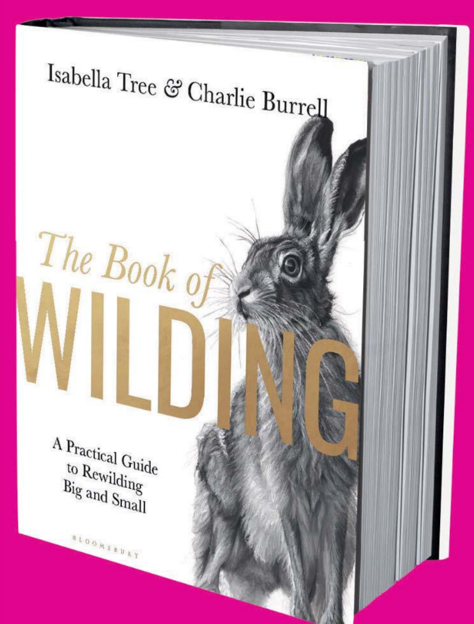

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THE BIG IDEA

# Why we need a new definition of junk food

## Ultra-processed products now make up 60% of our diet – and they're killing us, writes *Chris van Tulleken*

STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEM, food has replaced tobacco as the leading cause of early death globally. Each year, more people die in America from illnesses caused by poor diet than were killed fighting in every war in US history combined. In the UK the situation is equally dire.

Officially, the health effects of food are entirely due to its nutritional content – the amount of fat, salt, sugar and fibre it contains. The current system leaves it up to you to read the detailed information on the pack and decide how much to eat based on recommended values, and if you have children you'll need to know the values for them too. This is nigh-on impossible for most people – but even if you were able to calculate exactly how much fat, salt and sugar you were consuming in each mouthful, you would still be neglecting one vital determinant of health – how the food was processed.

You might feel like you've heard all this before. People have expressed concern about "processed food" for a long time, but it's not always been an easy concept to pin down. After all, we have been processing food for hundreds of thousands of years. The human diet was invented by primarily female domestic scientists who modified plants and animals by milling, shaking, pounding and grinding them, or altering them via fermentation and heat, before salting, smoking and drying them for preservation. Food processing has shaped almost every aspect of our bodies: we have the shortest guts of any animal our size because part of their job is outsourced to our kitchens. We are the only animal that *must* process its food to survive. Processing is fine.

But just over a decade ago a team of scientists in Brazil noticed a paradox in the data from their national nutrition surveys. Obesity had gone from being rare, to being the country's dominant public health problem – even though people were buying less oil and sugar. What they *were* eating more of was industrially processed food: biscuits, emulsified breads, confectionary and so on. The team developed a definition that distinguished between traditional food, whole or processed, and these items, which they termed ultra processed foods, or UPFs for short.

The full definition is pages long because it needs to encompass so many different products. But if you're trying to work out if something is a UPF, a good rule of thumb is that it'll be wrapped in plastic and contain an ingredient you don't find in a domestic kitchen.

The Brazilian team's work meant that the hypothesis – that UPFs were themselves the cause of health problems – could be tested. There are now hundreds of robust scientific studies which show that higher UPF intake is associated with weight gain, stroke, heart attack, cancer, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, fatty liver disease, inflammatory bowel disease, depression, dementia and early death.

In the UK we get around 60% of our calories from UPFs, and that figure is even higher for young people. At this point, it *is* our national food culture, and the material we build our children's bodies from. Much of it is familiar as "junk food", but our traditional idea of what constitutes that – chips, crisps, fizzy drinks – needs adjusting. It should include all supermarket bread; likewise breakfast cereal; packaged snacks, reconstituted meat products and frozen meals. And beware: lots of UPFs are being marketed as healthy, nutritious or useful for weight loss.

The evidence now shows that UPFs are harmful not simply because they are salty, fatty, sugary and low in fibre; the processing itself is at fault. Read the ingredients list and you'll see that most UPFs are made from commodity crops such as corn or soy deconstructed into their most basic molecules (protein isolates, refined oils and modified carbohydrates). These are then reassembled with additives to produce food in any shape or texture desired.

This manipulation of texture is a big part of the problem. UPFs are often very soft and very dry. The illusions of moisture is created with gums and oils, but the water content is low in order to improve shelf life. As a result these foods are extremely energy dense. High energy density combined with softness means you eat it quickly, and bodily systems evolved over millions of years to tell you when you're full can't keep up.

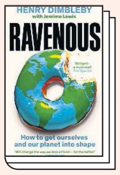
All this is scientifically fascinating, but trying to dissect exactly how UPFs harm us, though important, may be less useful from a public health perspective than taking a step back and asking why we have them in the first place. The culinary scientists of pre-history invented food for the nourishment of their families and communities. Ultra-processed food is part of a financialised food system whose purpose is profit. Products go through cycles of development and marketing over many decades, incorporating more and more processes and ingredients, all with the aim of making it hard to stop eating them. The evidence shows that for many people, myself included, some UPFs are as addictive as cigarettes and other drugs of abuse.

So, what should we do? We need to put a warning about ultra processed food in our national nutrition guidance, the NHS Eatwell Guide, alongside those that mention salt, fat and sugar. This seems like a small step but it's vital. From there we must tread carefully. For many people UPFs are the only affordable food available, and policy changes should avoid further stigmatising the disadvantaged groups most vulnerable to their effects. One win-win measure would be to limit the marketing of these products, especially to children. And we should make sure everything served in institutions like schools, hospitals and prisons is real food. Eventually we'll need to recognise, as with tobacco products, that warning labels are necessary. And there are broader lessons here too: we know that when people can afford to eat more healthily, they do. Reducing the weight gain, diabetes and heart attacks caused by UPFs means reducing the poverty and inequality that make them the only option for so many.

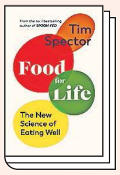
*Ultra-Processed People by Chris van Tulleken is published by Cornerstone.*

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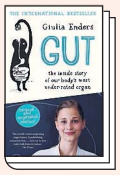



Illustration: Elia Barbieri

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# LIFESTYLE



**SEX**
**'I find it funny how dirty we can be'**
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**TRAVEL**
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## ABSOLUTELY PANTS

*The importance of getting your knickers right*



# Do people still wear thongs? Should I sleep in my underwear? Are period pants worth a try? Our experts get to the bottom of your undie-related queries

*Words: Morwenna Ferrier*
*Photography: Rosaline Shahnavaz*
*Styling: Melanie Wilkinson*

Undies, smalls, panties. For something as universally worn as knickers, buying them is a strangely confusing experience. The main issue is sizing: you can't try them on and, given there is no industry standardisation, it's essentially pot luck.

But it's also about what we need from them at any given time. Maybe you've just given birth, maybe you've got your period, or maybe you've finally got back into those jeans but don't have anything to wear underneath. The idea of having a wardrobe of knicker styles for every occasion seems ludicrous but, equally, there is no one size fits all. Our experts answer your most pressing pant questions.

**Does anyone wear thongs any more?**
Amazingly, yes. M&S has seen sales go up in the past two years, particularly among younger shoppers, thanks to the return of low-rise jeans. "Not everyone finds them comfy but the evidence shows they have no effect on the pH of the vaginal microbiome, which we need to protect us," says Louise Rahmanou, women's health specialist at Practice for Women in Cheltenham. "If you want to wear one, go ahead." They can take some getting used to, though. "If irritation occurs, wearing cotton or bamboo

versions can help," says Dr Leila Frodsham, consultant gynaecologist and spokesperson for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. M&S thongs are in a mix of modal (from beech tree pulp) and cotton, which seems, anecdotally, to be the most comfortable fabric for something that tight.

### Should I only wear cotton knickers?
No one needs reminding that our vulvas are delicate. Tight clothing, knickers included, can irritate the skin – while "synthetic underwear can create an environment that changes the microbiome and may make candida [thrush] more likely to thrive", says Frodsham. "Wearing undyed underwear in cotton or bamboo can help reduce the chances of thrush occurring, as they are more breathable." And, where possible, white knickers are preferable. "Dark-coloured underwear contains more allergens than undyed products," she says. But more important than the fabric is how you wash your knickers – Rahmanou suggests a hypoallergenic soap.

### What's the closest to going commando without actually going commando?
"Go for something with a lot of coverage, like Spanx shorts or even an all-in-one body shaper," says Guardian styling editor Melanie Wilkinson. This may sound counterintuitive, but that way you get "next to no bumps and the appearance of no underwear", she says. Fashion editor and knicker expert Naomi Pike has two options: "With something skintight I'll wear a seamless thong or a full-coverage brief that's got zero VPL."

### Where are we at with period pants?
Period pants are knickers with extra-absorbent fabric in the gusset. They're not always meant to replace sanitary products, rather supplement them, and are sold everywhere, from Primark to John Lewis. They have seen a particular boom since Covid. Ideally you want something cotton because it's more breathable. M&S says period pants are its fastest-growing range and, like other brands, it sells them with leakproof bags for if you need to change them. Rahmanou is a fan: "They're just better for the environment than sanitary products," she says, "though the focus should be on what feels comfortable."

### What about the menopause?
When it comes to the menopause, the main issue is vaginal dryness, says Rahmanou. "This can lead to chafing and discomfort, so you may be better off buying knickers that can handle vaginal lubricants and moisturiser." Try Modibodi or M&S.

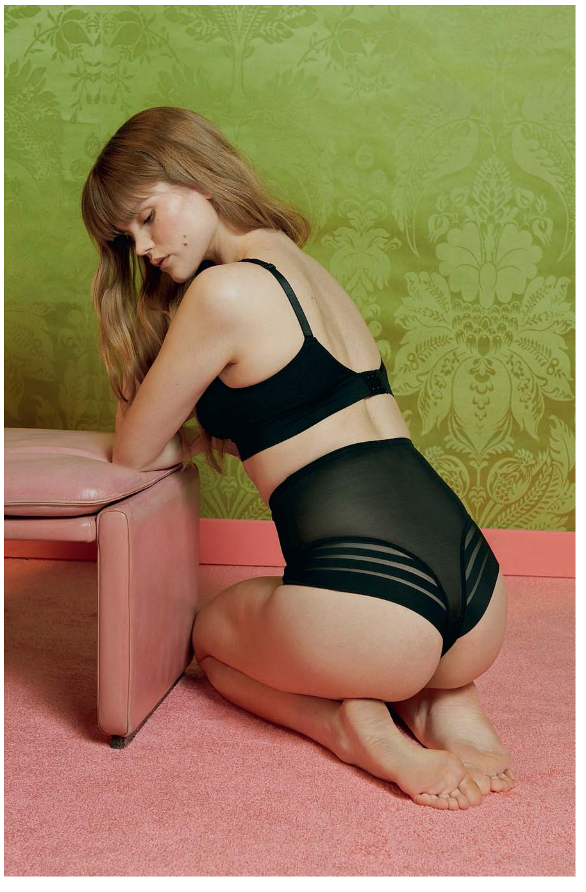
Sweating can also be an issue, in which case go for something natural and comfortable like cotton. Frodsham agrees: "Synthetic or tight fabrics can cause more discomfort and irritate the skin."

### What are the best knickers to wear after you've had a baby?
What knickers you wear in those early days depends on how you gave birth, and your recovery. For C-sections, you'll want something with a high enough waist to not rub on the wound: Cantaloop briefs (from John Lewis) sit just below the belly button. Cotton tends to be the most breathable fabric, but a lot of C-section underwear comes in polyamide, for lots of give, which may be more of a priority.

For all deliveries, there's also the issue of knickers being big enough to fit a maternity pad. Modibodi does various shapes in absorbent fabrics, and some have an antimicrobial lining that helps with odour and bacteria. Both are relatively affordable – ideally you'll only need two to three pairs – and come in generous sizes.

Of course, good intentions aside, you may want to go for something disposable. Frida sells shorts-style briefs for vaginal births and high-waisted ones for C-sections. Designed by mother-of-four Chelsea Hirschhorn, and based on her own recovery, they come in breathable microfibre and spandex – hospital versions tend to come in mesh and latex, which, for some, can irritate.

## 'With something skintight, I'll wear a seamless thong or a full-coverage brief that has zero VPL'



### What's the best size-inclusive underwear?
Market researcher Mintel defines plus-size as a size 18 or above. While the high street usually goes up to about 20, an increasing number of indie brands are deliberately designing nice knickers with larger sizes in mind. We Are We Wear make very sexy underwear that goes up to 3XL, which is about a size 28-30, as does Cuup, if you prefer a more modest cut (it specialises in no-dent, high-stretch waistbands).

Wilkinson also suggests Skims, and Savage x Fenty. If you find shopping for knickers daunting, remember that "the sizing always comes up a little bit small because of the job the elastic needs to do", she says. "For a clean line under bodycon or silk dresses, I'd always size up."

### Where are we at with shapewear?
Shapewear used to mean pain, discomfort and fraught loo trips (once off, they're hard to get back on). But modern products are a lot more wearable, and sales of everyday designs that focus on "minimal seams and no VPL" as much as suction rose by 55% between 2021 and 2022 at M&S. Pike has been wearing them since she was in her mid-teens. "Eighty per cent of my pants now have support," she says.

Pike's favourite brand is Skims, but Wolford and even Spanx have upped their comfort game. A new category is anti-chafe wear, offered by Next, Lululemon, Modibodi and M&S, which sold almost half a million pairs in 2022. These pants are less about sucking in and more about preventing rubbing, and are likely to be in polyamide rather than cotton, so that's something to bear in mind. As for fit, the higher the waist, the less likely it is to roll down.

### Should I sleep in knickers?
Yes and no. "Sleeping without underwear may be beneficial for women with thrush, as the infection thrives in warm, moist parts of the body," says Frodsham. For the rest of us, it's about comfort, and just pyjama bottoms is a nice halfway house, says Rahmanou. "If you're ovulating, you produce more discharge so you might prefer knickers at night."


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'High-waisted knickers in a lacy fabric will give tights something to cling on to'



### Do nice 'sexy' knickers exist?

Without conflating elastane and empowerment, there's something to be said for knickers that make the wearer feel good. And, therefore, sexy. "We should never underestimate how much our underwear affects how we feel," says Rahmanou. Newer brands seem especially good at this, and Pike recommends Parade, CouCou Intimates, and Underdays, which focus on comfort and accommodate different body shapes – and so are "more representative of our times than a frilly Brazilian".

Wilkinson is a fan of Dora Larsen, which makes flattering, lace-led underwear in unusual colour combinations: "So very much made with a female gaze in mind". Don't expect any red or black thongs. "I also think a sheer full knicker is pretty sexy," she says, pointing towards Agent Provocateur. "Think full, practical coverage but with a bit of a wink."

### What are the best knickers to wear with … gym leggings?

Wilkinson says: "Sweat-wicking knickers are particularly good for the gym: you want to avoid that sweat stain on your favourite leggings. Plus they just feel much fresher." Again, try Modibodi or M&S.

A good alternative, she says, is a Brazilian-shape knicker: "These are halfway between a thong and a knicker, but with wide sides." For others, including Pike, the only gym wear is a thong. Lululemon, Sweaty Betty and M&S all sell cotton-based thongs with a "breathable" finish, perfect for those prone to a sweatier workout.

### … or tights?

Wilkinson suggests high-waisted knickers in a lacy fabric. "These will offer something for the tights to cling on a to a bit, so they don't keep slipping down."

Pike says she tends to buy hosiery with some support so that she can wear a more relaxed knicker but still get support from the tights: "It's much more subtle and it makes me walk a little taller. I want my knicker line to sit exactly at the waist where my tights reach – it's just generally neater for layering on top, and I have yet to have a pair roll down on me when I do this,", she says. "It will probably mean reaching for a much fuller coverage pant, but I would recommend this, especially for anyone who's on the curvier side."

### … or jeans?

Largely speaking, high-waist cotton knickers are best. "One of the biggest fashion trends to influence underwear is the high waist, particularly on jeans," says Soozie Jenkinson, head of lingerie design at M&S. "Any knickers with a high-waist silhouette work well." Wilkinson agrees: "I'd go for a classic cotton high-leg knicker."

VPLs aren't a big concern with jeans, but comfort is. What you wear is largely dependent on your body, says Rahmanou. "You *can* wear synthetic but if you are prone to thrush or UTIs, you want a breathable fabric like cotton." This is not a time to go commando. Frodsham says: "Underwear can act as a protective layer from rougher fabrics such as jeans." ●

**MODELS** AMELIA, SERGUELEN AND GRACE AT MILK MODELS **HAIR** ROM SARTIPI USING ORIBE **MAKEUP** SOPHIE HIGGINSON USING NOBLE PANACEA AND TOM FORD BEAUTY **DIGITAL TECH** JACK STORER **SET STYLIST** LEE FLUDE **SET ASSISTANT** GREG EDWARDS **FASHION ASSISTANT** ROZ DONOGHUE **PAGE 61** RASPBERRY PERIOD PANTS: MODIBODI (ALSO ON PAGE 62). NAVY HIGH WAISTED BRIEFS: UNDERDAYS **PAGE 63** BLACK BRA & SHEER HIGH-WAISTED BRIEF: JOHN LEWIS (ALSO ON PAGE 65) **THIS PAGE, LEFT** LACE BRA & HIGH-WAISTED BRIEF: DORA LARSEN. NUDE BANDEAU & BRIEFS: NUBIAN SKIN **THIS PAGE, RIGHT** SAGE GREEN HIGH WAISTED BRIEF & SCOOP NECK BRA: NUDEA. NUDE BOYSHORT & TRIANGLE BRA: SKIMS **PROPS** PINEAPPLE SILK DAMASK WALLPAPER IN VERDE CHIARO 07: DE GOURNAY. CHAIR AND PINK CARPET: STYLIST'S OWN

MATCHMAKING GUARDIAN READERS SINCE 2009

## 'My friends would be weirded out by how similar the two of us are'

# Blind Date



### Dora
*24, works in a museum*

**What were you hoping for?**
To meet my soulmate, of course. Failing that, a funny story to tell.

**First impressions?**
I was early and Jago was there already so my first impression was that he was prompt. He seemed friendly, if nervous.

**What did you talk about?**
So much! We both care a lot about what we do so there was work chat. Also films, music and favourite European countries. And our shared suppressed dream of doing standup comedy.

**Most awkward moment?**
Two desserts arrived and we both swore we'd ordered the chocolate semifreddo, not the dessert wine and biscotti. We politely shared both.

**Good table manners?**
Yes, definitely. We both ordered pasta (not the most graceful thing to eat on a date) but I felt very at ease.

**Best thing about Jago?**
He can hold an interesting conversation which isn't just about himself.

**Would you introduce Jago to your friends?**
They would definitely get along - and be weirded out by how similar we are.

**Describe Jago in three words.**
Smart, sweet, funny.

**What do you think Jago made of you?**
Hopefully that I was interesting, and not a terrible person for giving up my vegetarianism.

**Did you go on somewhere?**
To a very nice pub for a pint.

**And … did you kiss?**
No.

**If you could change one thing about the evening, what would it be?**
Maybe more of a romantic spark but we definitely connected so I'm not ruling anything out.

**Marks out of 10?**
8.

**Would you meet again?**
We've exchanged numbers and a second date is in the works.

### Jago
*25, policy assistant*

**What were you hoping for?**
A pleasant evening involving interesting conversation.

**First impressions?**
I was shocked to see how much we had in common, and her fantastic smile.

**What did you talk about?**
Everything from art and English comedy to the Labour party.

**Most awkward moment?**
Me not remembering any of the bands playing at the festival I'm going to in the summer.

**Good table manners?**
Yes, she handled herself very well, whereas I spilt ice-cream on the table.

**Best thing about Dora?**
Her passion for east London.

**Would you introduce Dora to your friends?**
Certainly, though she may want to keep her opinions on The Office to herself.

**Describe Dora in three words.**
Intriguing, funny, beautiful.

**What do you think Dora made of you?**
I'm not entirely sure. Probably vaguely shocked to find someone as passionate about English brutalism as she is.

**Did you go on somewhere?**
Yes, a lively pub for chat about French cinema, Edward Hopper and family.

**And … did you kiss?**
No. But I felt we could have.

**If you could change one thing about the evening, what would it be?**
I'd have ordered a coconut margarita, not the cherry pomegranate mojito.

**Marks out of 10?**
10.

**Would you meet again?**
Yes, we are discussing which French film we should go and see together.

*Jago and Dora ate at Ida, London W1. Fancy a blind date? Email blind.date@theguardian.com*



JILL MEAD/THE GUARDIAN

# My wife is gardening. I'm writing in my shed. It's a risky situation



**Tim Dowling**
**On modern life**

A long time ago I read a quotation in a book of advice, which held that the hardest thing about being a writer is convincing your spouse that looking out of the window is part of your job. I have never been able track down the exact wording or the author of that quotation; when I look online the only source I can find for it is me, because I cite it so regularly. This is perhaps fitting, since my wife thinks I made it up.

It is mid-morning and I am staring out of the window, hard at work. From my office shed I have a clear view of my wife as she struggles to push a wheelbarrow full of soil across the garden. This is a very dangerous position to be in; if I accidentally catch her eye, no unattributed quote about the hardest part of being a writer will be accepted in mitigation.

I turn back to my computer screen and place my fingers on the keyboard, but after a few minutes my chair begins to swivel of its own accord, turning slowly anticlockwise. I find myself facing the window again. My wife is now kneeling on a pad, digging weeds from a crowded bed. There is a dot of mud on her cheek, and a strand of her tied-back hair has worked its way loose, falling across her …

"Busy?" she shouts, looking up at me.

"Yeah," I say. "Busy thinking." My wife tilts her head and raises an eyebrow, indicating that I have once again, to her surprise, expanded her capacity for disappointment.

One possible mitigating factor: it is a bank holiday. I am facing a looming deadline while my wife has elected to spend her extra day off digging in the dirt six metres from my desk. "She likes gardening," I say to myself, very quietly. But I accept the juxtaposition is unfortunate.

There is also the matter of the coat rack, formerly of the wall next to the front door. My youngest son presented it to me two days ago - six hooks spaced along a plank of wood, with three screws sticking out the back.

"This came off," he said, handing it over, a scarf still hanging from one of the hooks.

"I can see," I said.

"There are coats everywhere," he said, pulling on his own jacket and heading for the front door.

From where I'm sitting I can see the coat rack lying across the kitchen table, hooks pointing up, as well as my wife, presently driving the point of a trowel into the earth with a sort of contained fury, little heaps of pulled weeds piled up around her.

I turn back to my computer screen, which is blank. I look at the clock, which says it is 11.30am - not yet time to panic.

The door to my office is yanked open. My wife steps inside and surveys the narrow sofa directly behind my chair. It is piled with books, musical instruments and old paperwork.

*I am staring out of the window, hard at work, with a clear view of my wife struggling with the wheelbarrow*

"There's nowhere for me to sit when I visit," she says.

"And no available appointments either," I say. "Best to ring in the morning, in case there's a cancellation."

"I'm going to the shops," she says. "Do you need anything?"

"No," I say. "Oh, wait. Printer ink."

"You'll be lucky," she says. "It's a bank holiday."

"Yeah, for some of us."

My wife leaves a little silence here, to give me a moment to think about why this was the wrong thing to say.

"I thought perhaps you were going to ask for something to fix that coat rack," she says.

"I don't know how I'm going to fix that," I say.

"What do we need?" she says. "Bigger screws?"

"Or fewer coats," I say. She stands and leaves. I return to the screen.

At 7pm, my work still unfinished, I return to the house through a meticulously weeded garden, thinking: another bank holiday squandered.

On my way past the kitchen table I see the coat rack, and I pause.

I search through my tools and parts, but the only screws I can find are enormous, the sort of thing you would use to attach a balcony to the side of your house. I think: I don't even have a drill bit that big. But it turns out I do.

After half an hour of drilling and banging and swearing, I step into the living room, where my wife is watching TV.

"Success?" she says.

I say: "Uh-huh". But I think: are you kidding? You could hang a lifeboat off those hooks.

## Edith Pritchett On millennial life




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TRUE STORIES OF OUR SEX LIVES

# This is how we do it

## *'A tired, throwaway midweek shag doesn't interest me'*



**Anya, 32**

Mo is unusually tall, which is exciting. I'm 5ft 10in myself and I have spent my life dating men who were ever-so-slightly shorter than me. As a result I have a long-term hip problem, having learned to stand with my hip artfully cocked to create the illusion that the man I was standing next to was in fact taller than me. I always felt like I might be squishing them, but with Mo I sometimes feel like he might accidentally squish me to death in the heat of the moment.

We have sex on average once a week, down from once a day when we met, 1½ years ago. Mo has a rule where we don't do it unless we are both in a position to impress. He thinks bad sex breeds bad sex. So we usually do it in the daytime, on a weekend, and we each have a bath before we get started. He is very funny and also uninhibited – the kind of person who would sing out loud walking down the street. I love this about him, and it really comes to the fore in bed. He gives every moment his complete attention and is never embarrassed by what he wants us to do together.

I don't think I'm a very inhibited person, but before I met him I would at least regulate the noises I made in bed or think about the way my body looked in certain positions. Now I don't think of anything like that – and it has made sex newly ecstatic.

One recurring argument we have is that I want to have sex more than he does. I would probably be up for it every day. He has a skin condition on his penis area, which he says is the main reason he doesn't want to do it, but when I am feeling less confident and more paranoid I suspect him of using the condition as an excuse. Sometimes when I initiate, he says no (very sweetly) and I get sad.

In some ways, though, I like the dynamic where I want it all the time and he occasionally deigns to give it to me. It makes me feel like this greedy sex monster, which is sometimes a bit horrible but also, strangely, a turn-on. It's a thrill to love and want someone this much. I have never experienced anything close to it before.

**Mo, 34**

Anya is tall, gorgeous and curvaceous, all of which I enjoy sexually, especially the curvaceous part: I enjoy squeezing and grabbing all the sexy, abundant parts of her body. We connect really well during sex, and I feel comfortable to express myself and play around with whatever comes into my head in the moment.

We have quite a playful and fun relationship in general, but it's still surprising how dirty our sex can be in the things we say or do or pretend. We often laugh about it afterwards.

Like in most relationships, the quantity of our sex has decreased over time – but the quality certainly hasn't, which I think is by far the most important thing. When we were first dating I felt it necessary that we had sex at least twice each time we met; now, a year and a bit on, we have it once a week. This upsets Anya, which is understandable, but I like to see sex as special. I'm not interested in having a tired, throwaway midweek shag. Having sex once a week means I can give it my full attention and energy. It feels more exciting and deeper this way.

Also, I suffer from a skin condition called psoriasis, which until recently only affected my scalp and chest. It's now decided to appear on my groin, which is extremely inconvenient and embarrassing. I know Anya doesn't mind, but it is still upsetting to me and sometimes painful.

For it to clear up, I have to stop masturbating and limit the amount of sex so it can heal. But I have needs! So when it's nearly healed, Anya and I have sex, which unfortunately aggravates the condition. This has impacted our sex life. We'd definitely be having more sex if I didn't have psoriasis, but I don't think it would make our relationship stronger or weaker. The fact is, every time we have sex, it's perfect – and I want to keep it that way.

**As told to Kitty Drake**

*Would you and your partner like to share the story, anonymously, of your sex life? Email sexlives@theguardian.com with a brief outline of what you get up to in the bedroom*

*Illustration: Ryan Gillett*

# You be the judge
# Should my friend stop nicking my seat in my favourite cafe?



*Interviews: Georgina Lawton*

## The prosecution
### Omar
*I told Raoul about the cafe, and he repaid me by taking my favourite spot*

My good friend Raoul has just returned from four months travelling, which is great because I've missed him. But unfortunately, now he is back, we are beefing over our local cafe. Raoul is, I feel, colonising my favourite spot and taking the best seat.

We live on the same road in the sunny European capital where we met two years ago. I've hung out a lot with him and his girlfriend, and the three of us would have co-working days at an expensive space in the city centre.

When Raoul went travelling, I decided to cancel my membership there as it was pricey. I found a lovely little cafe round the corner and started working there instead. I love this cafe: it's light, airy, has these really comfy booths in the back, and also nice soft chairs in the main bit. It plays great music and, best of all, the staff let you work there all day. I often buy lunch and stay for five hours a day, but they don't mind if you only buy a coffee and still sit there all day. I'm there three to four times a week working remotely as a copywriter for clients back home in the UK.

When Raoul returned, he told me he needed a new co-working spot as he'd cancelled his old one, too. Like a good pal, I put him on to my cafe. Pretty soon afterwards, I started seeing him there every day. That was fine except he would always go for my seat, right in the corner, tucked away from the action but still in the great lighting. I've come in a few mornings and said, "What's this then?" And he just laughs.

I've had to move to other tables without plugs because Raoul has decided my table is now his table. It's annoying because he gets up earlier than me so I don't think I will ever beat him to my spot. He's told me to pick another table, but I like this one.

I think he should defer to me before I arrive and set up shop at another table. We don't always work at this cafe on the same days, but on the days I do come in, Raoul should move elsewhere. It's irritating because I had to persuade him to come to the cafe, and reassure him that he'd be welcome. And he repays me by stealing my spot. I regret telling him about it now.

## The defence
## Raoul
*Omar doesn't own the cafe, or the seat. If he wants it, he should get up earlier*

The best thing about living abroad is that you are always finding cool new places to eat and hang out. When Omar told me about the cafe near our house I was, like, "great" because after travelling I was too broke to renew the membership to my old co-working space and needed a new spot.

Then he started getting annoyed that I was going, which begs the question: why did he tell me about it in the first place? Whenever he comes in and I'm working at his favourite table he gives me the evil eye. I don't even go over to say hi until he's had a coffee and settled in, because he looks as if he wants to kill me.

He calls the table "his seat". It is nice, admittedly. It's not next to any other customers, it overlooks the whole cafe and there's a fantastic selection of plugs to choose from. Then again, it's a big cafe! There's enough room for all of us.

There are velvet banquettes in the back but I know Omar doesn't like to work there as there isn't any natural lighting. Omar always says he's "joking" about the seat thing, but I reckon he sort of resents me for sitting where he likes.

But if he's not there, then the table is a free-for-all. He doesn't own the cafe. Or the table. So both of us can sit where we like.

Omar gets up later than me and doesn't make it into the cafe before midday. I'm there at nine and out by two. When I finish work he often gets up to take the table, so in my mind we sort of share it now and that seems fair.

Omar says I'm disrupting his "workflow" and has even texted my girlfriend, Millie, at 11am to ask where I am. If Millie replies to say I'm at the cafe, he will then text me: "Are you in my seat lol?" I reply: "Yes, I am." I think he secretly wants me to move before he arrives, but I'm not doing that. I recently offered to text him the days that I will be working there so we can take turns at the best table. Omar replied: "No, no it's cool." But I know it's not. He just doesn't want to look precious by making a co-working schedule for a cafe. But I've tried. What more can I do?

## The jury
*of Guardian readers*

**Should Raoul shove off and find his own seat?**

*Raoul and Omar's work schedules only overlap by two hours, and not even every day, so this impacts Omar very little. If it's the big deal Omar makes it out to be, he could get up earlier or take Raoul up on his work schedule offer.*
**Aurelia, 23**

*A cafe is a public space, so neither Omar nor Raoul have a right to any table, whether Omar likes that or not. Omar should work on letting go of his attachment to "his spot". If he wants an optimal co-working space, he could always pay for one.*
**Andrew, 33**

*Omar not only expects Raoul to behave exactly as he sees fit, he also spurns his obvious solutions. However, Raoul persists in doing something that upsets a friend. Why? If the friendship is worth anything, Raoul should indulge Omar and move off the table at midday.*
**Mike, 55**

*Raoul has responded reasonably to Omar's precious behaviour. Would he inform a stranger that it is "his" seat? It seems petty to jeopardise a friendship when their working days barely overlap. Notwithstanding this is actually a cafe, not a workspace!*
**Alyssa, 35**

*Omar needs to step back and remember he told Raoul he would be welcome – he is now making it an unwelcome space. This isn't a co-working space they're paying for. Omar should either get up early or find another cafe – and don't tell Raoul about it.*
**Roscoe, 31**

THE VERDICT

| | |
|---|---|
| **Guilty** Raoul should give up his seat | 1 |
| **Not guilty** Omar should temper his cafe culture | 4 |

**You've heard the cases, now you decide ...**
Scan to vote on this week's dispute, share your own, or be one of the jury

# I was brought up in an abusive family. Should I cut them off?



## Ask
## Annalisa Barbieri

**I'm going through issues that have churned up painful memories of my childhood and adulthood. It's difficult to know how to go on.**

**I sought counselling and was told to never see or speak to my family again. It sounds easy, but I'm drawn to them like a drug habit. I know they're bad for my health but I continue to attend family gatherings or invite siblings or parents to mine.**

**My father is in his 80s and dying. My parents' marriage was tempestuous and codependent. My siblings and I witnessed and were in receipt of aggression. My mother would punch me and knock me to my knees for a minor misdemeanour. My father would kick and punch through doors. There were verbal put-downs. I was ganged up on by my siblings, who were spiteful and degrading – something my mother found funny.**

**When I was a teenager, my mother was approached by a man in the street who asked if he could take me out. She gave him our address, and after taking me out he sexually assaulted me. I've heard similar things happened to my sister, with my mother's blessing.**

**Now we're middle-aged with our own lives. I'm a mother (a good, loving one). How do I heal? I get depressive episodes.**

Your longer original letter made me very sad, and angry for you. I'm not sure you have taken in how abusive and exploitative your childhood was. It's as though you can list the things that happened to you (some of which I have excluded) yet divorce yourself from it. This is the mark of trauma. No wonder you get so distressed when you spend time with your family.

I consulted trauma specialist Dr Jo Stubley. She said that part of a parent's job is to teach siblings to learn to get along and love each other, yet yours seemed to do the opposite.

"Counsellors have told you to stop seeing your family," she said, "but if that's coming from an external source, it's not going to work. You have to make a very active decision and ask yourself if this is causing more harm than good, and why you want to keep seeing them if they cause you harm.

I asked Dr Stubley why you "kept going back", something I see a lot. She called it the repetition compulsion. "We keep repeating things because we can't fully remember them, haven't processed them, instead keep going back in the hope that something different will happen – and this hope is the addictive part you talk about."

You need to grieve for what you didn't have and can't have. But to do that, you have to "properly remember, think about and feel what happened to you". And who can blame you for avoiding this?

Going back to therapy is a good idea. "You need long-term space for yourself," said Stubley, who also suggested looking into support groups such as Survivor's Voices. She also recommended Oprah Winfrey and Dr Bruce Perry's book, What Happened to You?.

How do you carry on? By asking yourself, "What do I need?" before each interaction with family, and listening to the answer. If that answer is to not see or speak to them, do that. On another day the answer could be different. Block their numbers to give yourself some space; it doesn't have to be for ever. Limit, and control, contact. Put yourself front and centre (and safe) in your world. It doesn't sound like your family knows how to do this.

You've worked very hard to become a good mother, and you told me you have friends. Your love and attention has a place to go where it's valued.

*If you would like advice on a personal matter, email ask.annalisa@theguardian.com. See guardian.com/letters-terms for terms and conditions*

*Illustration: Joren Joshua*

# Give your wardrobe the sartorial hit of dark chocolate it craves



## Jess Cartner-Morley
## On trends



*Choco-chrome is a specific colour palette: black and white and grey, softened with earthy tones*

MODEL: ANA AT BODY LONDON. HAIR AND MAKEUP: SOPHIE HIGGINSON USING LIVING PROOF AND SKINCEUTICALS. DRESS, BLAZER AND BAG: ALL ZARA. SANDALS: IVYLEE

Might it be time to wean ourselves off dopamine dressing? Are we ready to graduate from the picture-book cheerfulness of rainbow colours, and slip into something more sophisticated. What do you think? Shall we give it a go? I'm game if you are. I don't think we are ready to flip into stark black-and-white just yet, though, so a cosy, warm, sepia-toned neutral combo feels about right.

Let's call it Choco-chrome: monochrome, but sweetened with a syrupy dash of rich brown. You know how a square of dark chocolate hits a sweet spot of being a sugary treat that feels grown up and refined? That is kind of what we are doing here. We are trading up, wardrobe-wise, from bingeing on Haribo-brights to nibbling on a piece of Green & Blacks 85% cocoa.

I don't think it would serve any purpose to spell out the depressing roll-call of reasons why the world has been so in need of dopamine dressing over the past few years, suffice to say that there are times when Good Vibes Only is a necessary wardrobe prescription.

Life is still a bit rough and bumpy but, fingers crossed, it doesn't any more feel as though we are fighting fires on every single front 24 hours a day. In fashion terms, that means that we get to be cool again, rather than having to look jolly all the time. In other words, you are hereby released from a civilian duty to do your bit for national morale by wearing Smartie-coloured dresses to meetings.

Choco-chrome is a specific colour palette: black and white and grey, but softened with earthy tones of brown, caramel and cream - but it also very much a vibe. Dopamine dressing was about colours that would cheer us up: a pop of yellow, a flash of cloudless sky blue, a sugar-hit of sweet pink.

Dopamine dressing was fashion to put a much-needed smile on your face and on the faces of the people you met. Choco-chrome dressing, on the other hand, is a bit less about making friends and a bit more about making an impression.

In the latest series of Succession, the sibs are all seen wearing Choco-chrome. No strong colour, but lots of soft browns and tans as well as black and white, echoing the opening credits. Without getting sidetracked into an elaborate dissection of Succession's sartorial signposting, it seems to me that Shiv, Kendall and Roman's mother-nature-meets-boardroom shades of caramel and espresso brown reflect that there are family ties enmeshed with financial interest.

The key metric by which I judge the usefulness of any outfit is the ratio of effort to impact. Outfits that look inventive and eye-catching without requiring a lot of thought to put together are what we are all after, I think. I love this sort of clothing as much as I love pieces that look a lot more expensive than they are, which is a lot, because those are my favourite kind of clothes.

Dopamine dressing was a bargain when you were short of time and headspace: pull on a dress and a pair of trainers, and if the dress is apple green or electric blue, you will read as having put together an outfit.

The downside of wearing muted colours is that you do need to put a little more effort in. Black and brown together can look a little smudgy otherwise. The simplest formula is to wear two dark tones with a highlight of something pale - a creamy handbag, as seen here, for instance. Or pearl earrings, or the crisp triangle-flash of a shirt collar, or a flat-white trainer. Or - and yes, I'm channelling Shiv here - lift your earth-tones with a judicious drip of jewellery.

You remember what's at the end of the rainbow, right? Rainbow dressing may be fading, but the pot of gold is here to stay.

*Photography: Tom J Johnson. Styling: Melanie Wilkinson*

# Seeing is believing when it comes to makeup mirrors



## Sali Hughes
### On beauty



PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT: BRUCE HORAK. GLASSES: CUBITTS. MODEL: BOBBIE AT THE BAME AGENCY. HAIR AND MAKEUP: SARAH CHERRY

I never imagined I would ever own a pair of "makeup readers" – specs on which one lens pivots to allow the wearer to apply makeup to that eye while still being able to see with the other. But as someone who cannot get to grips with contacts, I was desperate. I tried a pair and they were impossibly fiddly. Not being able to see my face is an occupational hindrance for me, but frustrating and inconvenient for anyone.

Being (mildly) visually impaired is also expensive. I rely heavily on my SimpleHuman illuminated magnifying mirrors for work, but having recently broken my third handbag version (and they're £80-odd a pop), even I can see that the situation is unsustainable. So I've been looking at other options.

The problem with many magnifying mirrors is that they're designed for focused jobs such as tweezing. I bought a Tweezerman Tweezermate illuminated mirror, with high hopes. But these are no good for makeup application because one cannot see the entire face or eye area undistorted. It is the same with the luxury makeup application boxes (such as Beautifect) that I've seen promoted on social media. These very pricy makeup cases are a nice enough idea, but anyone who struggles to see up close will know that it's impossible to get a mirror that is integrated into the lid of a box near enough to the face to be useful.

*Many magnifying mirrors are designed for focused jobs like tweezing but no good for applying makeup*

There are myriad illuminated mirrors available online. Many of them are nasty and plasticky; others are great but cost a fortune, such as those by Simplehuman and Glamcor Riki. But after several months of trying, I can very gladly recommend the **Fancii LED Lighted Travel Makeup Mirror**, for which I paid a fair £18.99.

This oversized clamshell compact has a 10X magnifying mirror on one side for makeup application, and a plain one surrounded by daylight-mimicking LED light on the other. It opens almost completely flat so can be held close to the face, and it's powered by watch batteries (a USB version is £44). It's almost perfect.

In addition, I urge anyone with compromised near vision to download the free **Mirror** app, which works as a light-up mirror, with multiple magnifying settings. I must, however, manage your expectations. Despite the online reviews, when it comes to makeup application, brow tweezing or any other precision task, this is no substitute for a real mirror. But it is nifty for making quick checks for smudges, wonky lines or lipstick teeth – and since we usually have our phones to hand, it's surprisingly helpful.



## Anita Bhagwandas
### Trends on trial

Can a bath in epsom salt help me get more beauty sleep?

**The hack**
Following Jennifer Aniston's lead by making a bath in epsom salt part of your daily wind-down ritual.

**The test**
Sleep is crucial. I don't have insomnia, but my brain does fire into anxiety mode right before bed. And actually making myself go to bed can be a battle too. But I'm hoping Aniston's epsom salt bath solution could help.

Epsom salt, also known as magnesium sulphate, is a completely different chemical compound from table salt. Studies are pretty scant on whether the skin really can absorb magnesium, but it is known to be a muscle relaxant and to help the brain produce the neurotransmitters that reduce stress an induce sleep.

So I tried the recommended three baths over a week to see if it could help me sleep. You simply run a warm bath, add about 500g (shopping hack: TK Maxx often has cheap epsom salts) and soak for about 20 minutes.

I definitely felt much calmer on the nights I took the baths, and noticeably more laid-back. It could just be my skin releasing endorphins in warm water, which obviously helps, but with the epsom salt I felt an extra level of chill.

**The verdict**
Try it. It could be a placebo (maybe it's just the bath?) but I found adding the salt helped reduce my anxiety levels. Now, if only something could help me wake up in the morning …




*Photography: Kellie French. Illustration: Edith Pritchett*

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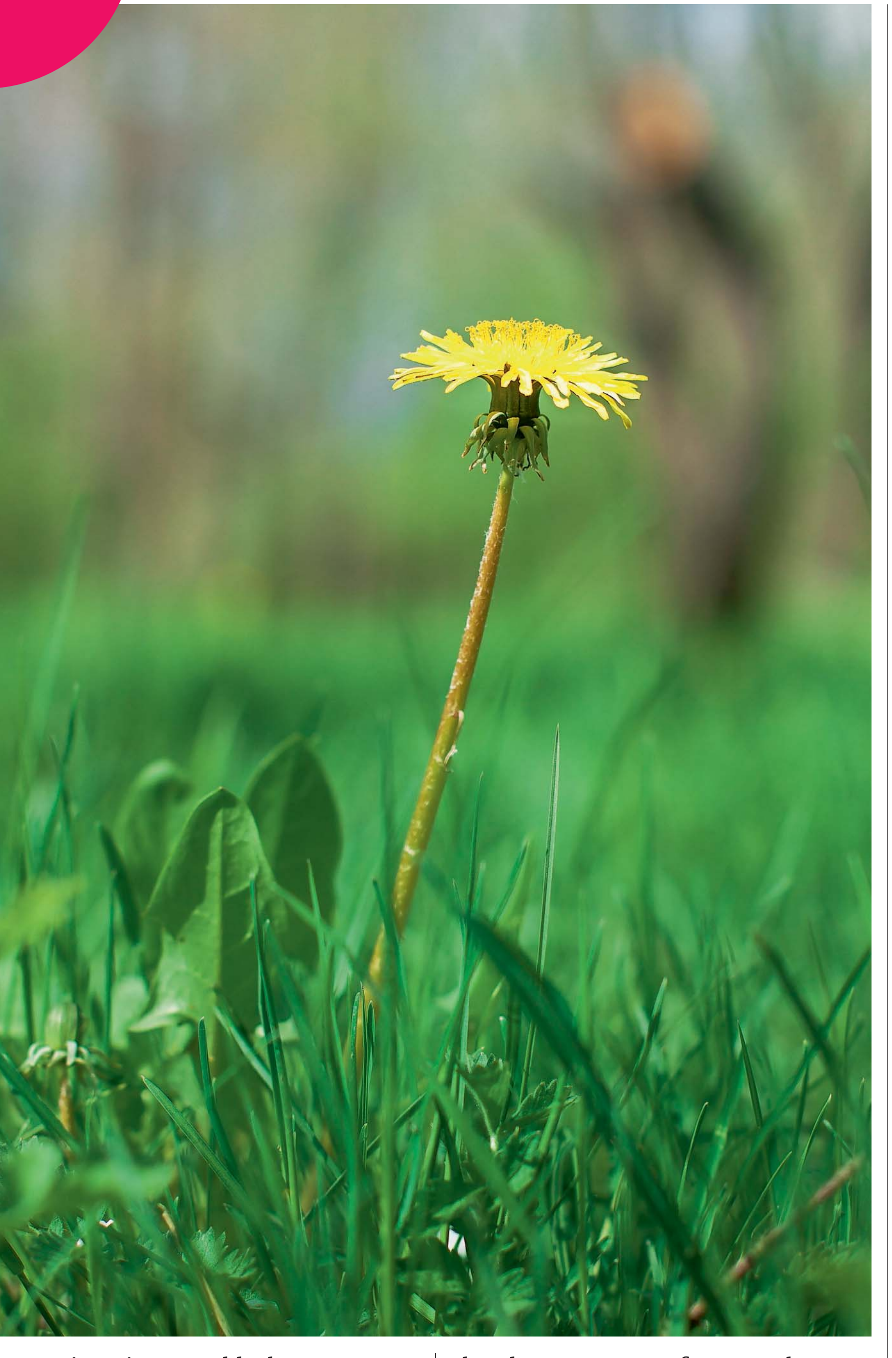

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# Not only is it tedious, but cutting your lawn is bad for garden biodiversity. Say no mow!



**Alice Vincent**
**On flowers**

In general, I try to adopt a "good for you, not for me" approach to other people's gardens. Ultimately, gardening is something that has brought me greatest pleasure when I have felt able to do it exactly as I wish. If you want to fill yours with gnomes, go for it! Want to dedicate all of your flower beds to spinach? Enjoy your iron-rich diet! Whatever makes you happy.

Where I struggle, though, is with lawns. Specifically, ones made of plastic (not to be discussed today – we're still getting to know one another) and those maintained by someone wearing protective clothing, who arrives with a large vessel of chemicals and a sprayer.

The history of the lawn is complex and problematic, but the fact is: most gardens have one. Even my garden has one, and I don't even like them. These often ecologically bankrupt swathes of green and, in our increasingly hot summers, yellow, feed into the myth of the "English Garden", and we spend untold hours and reserves spraying and watering and mowing to maintain their carpet-like appearance.

But imagine a world where we just … didn't? This time last year I spent a gossipy afternoon in the long, skinny and gloriously wild garden of Andrew Timothy O'Brien, a friend and clever gardener whose approach is pleasingly non-interventional.

Technically, there is a bit of lawn in O'Brien's garden, but he hadn't mown it all year and so it had bled beautifully into his flowerbeds – soft and wafting with daisies and dandelions, lady's smock and speedwell. Where he and his spaniel, Nell, had trodden, a gentle path had been forged, but otherwise the place was left for the pollinators.

It was the essence of what's become known as No Mow May in practice: abandon your mower for a month at a time (or, indeed, longer) to improve the fates of our invertebrates. We may be halfway through May, but there's never been a better time to unshackle yourself from one of the most tedious of horticultural tasks.

*The history of the lawn is problematic, but the fact is: most gardens have one. Even mine, and I don't like them*

Since the 1930s, 97% of British wildflower meadows have vanished; we've lost dozens of species of bee and hoverfly since 1980 due to insecticides (like those sprayed on domestic lawns), habitat loss and general biodiversity decline. Plantlife, the charity behind No Mow May, claims that putting the mower away can lead to an active reversal of this: a tenfold increase in bees thanks to the growth of nectar-rich plants such as white clover, daisy and selfheal can put on in a matter of weeks.

I tend to mow once a month, tops, due to laziness and curiosity – I like seeing what turns up when I don't – but if you enjoy the satisfaction of neat stripes may I suggest adopting a landing strip approach? Even leaving parts of a lawn, such as concentric circles or a strip down the middle of a broader path, can vastly improve wildflower growth.



**Gynelle Leon's**
**Houseplant of the week**
Fierce begonia

**Why will I love it?**
This plant's large, textured leaves look as if they are covered in dark, pointy fangs, which renders it visually stunning. Most people find it hard to resist touching it. Additionally, the fierce begonia (*Begonia ferox*) produces beautiful pink flowers that add a certain elegance to its already impressive appearance.

**Light or shade?**
Bright, indirect light.

**Where should I put it?**
Near a kitchen window that faces east or west.

**How do I keep it alive?**
The plant prefers to be kept moist but not soggy. Water when the top inch of soil dries out and allow excess to drain out of the pot. Use a well-draining potting mix to prevent root rot.

**Did you know …**
*Begonia ferox* is native to Guangxi region in southwestern China, and is part of the extensive Begoniaceae family. In some cultures, it is believed to have healing properties, and its fermented leaves are used to treat everyday ailments such as headaches and sore throats.

*Fierce among equals*



MAKSYM ISACHENKO/GETTY IMAGES; HIGHLANDMOSS.COM

Working in a chippie, learning to drink vodka and buying underwear by the kilo ... *Ben Aitken* found much to love during an impromptu year in Poland
**Overleaf, he shares his top 10 tips on the country**

# There's a guy works down the chip shop swears he's Polish

In the winter of 2016, a few months before the Brexit referendum, I decided to move to Poland. I thought it best to get out there while I still could, before my liberty to earn the minimum wage in 20-odd countries was irrevocably lost.

I can't say it was love at first sight. It was too cold for that. It's not easy to fall head over heels at -4C. When I boarded the bus outside Poznań airport, I shared with the driver the only phrase I had mastered on my journey from Luton. *Kocham cie*. I love you. The driver's reply was to raise an eyebrow, shake his head and usher me on board. It was an auspicious beginning.

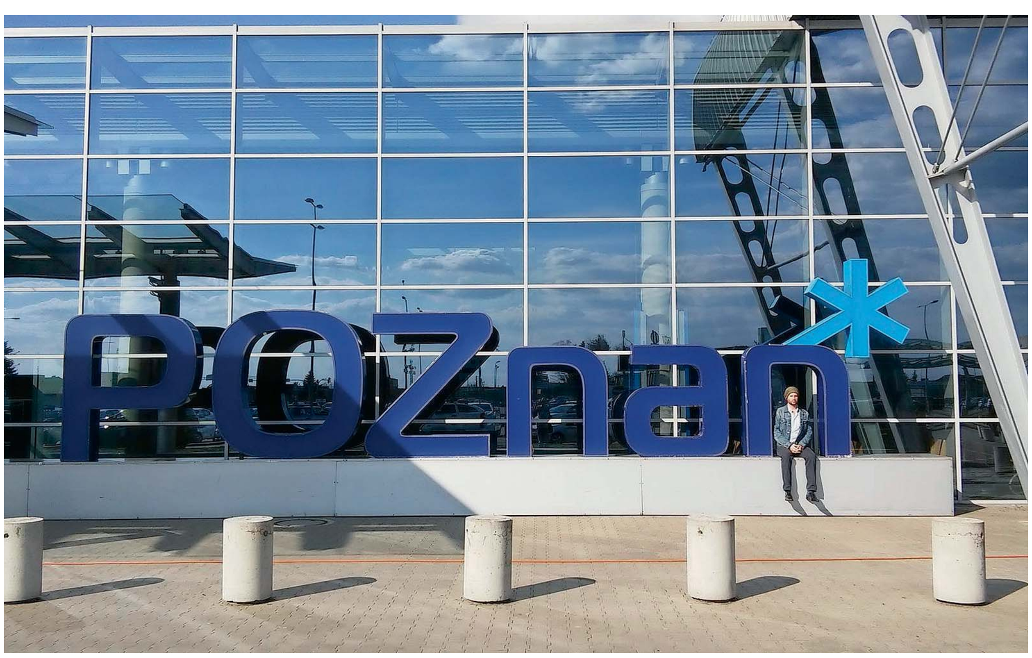
The bus delivered me to Poznań's old town. I was instantly taken by the colourful building fronts, the elaborate gables, the engrossing main square. Despite the cold, I stood looking in the windows of shops and bars and wondered at their unsubtle inducements to sample such things as *wódka wiśniowa* (cherry vodka) and *legginsy* (leggings).

Within an hour I was in a pub called Dragon sampling *śliwowica* (plum brandy) and *pierogi* (dumplings). Within a week, I was sharing a flat with an engineer called Jędrzej. Within a month, I had a job in a fish and chip shop. And within six weeks, I was in love.

I fell for the places first. Over the next year, whenever I wasn't required to peel spuds or bone cod, I skipped town and hit the road. I went north to Gdańsk and the Polish Riviera, east to Warsaw and the lakes of Masuria, and south to Wrocław, the mountains and Łódź, the Polish Hollywood.

I liked what Poland was made of. I liked what it had, what it could claim as its own. I liked its cities and towns, its bricks and mortar. Szczecin. Białystok. Katowice. Even industrial Bytom in Upper Silesia. These places aren't top of the Polish charts. They are the Polish equivalents of Bradford, Wrexham, East Kilbride and Carrickfergus. They may not have signature landmarks, picture-postcard districts or vast followings on Instagram, but what they do have is the advantage of being beautifully normal and utterly unaffected. These places aren't posing; they're just going about their business. Each one gave me something: pause for thought, cause to swoon, a fraction of the whole.

The bits in between aren't bad, either. The medieval forest. The lake district. The enchanting undulations of Lower Silesia. The glimpses of sea, the flashes of desert, the accidental beauty of industrial hinterlands. I took delight in joining the dots. By train. I'd sit in the restaurant carriage, take my time over a paper plate of *kotlet schabowy* (breaded pork cutlet) and






The cover illustration of Ben Aitken's first book, A Chip Shop in Poznań, right, is an account of his year in Poland; and the writer at Poznań airport, left

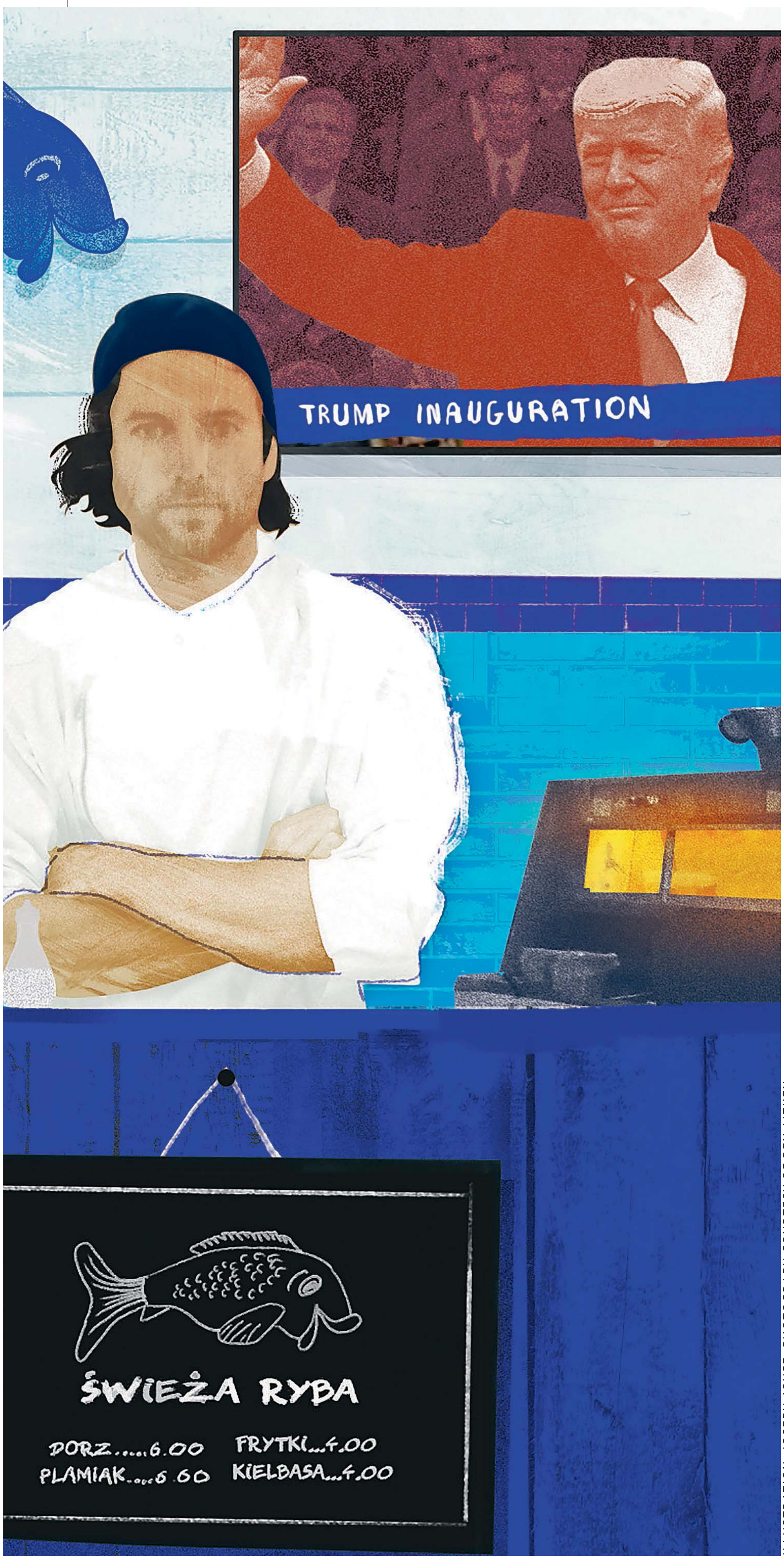



ILLUSTRATION: JOSEPH JOYCE. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BEN AITKEN

## There's a sense of a country still recovering and correcting itself, yet flourishing

pickles, and watch Lesser Poland (or Małopolska) gradually slide past.

I'd make small talk with the staff. Ordering a second cup of black tea, or a third bottle of *piwo* (beer), I'd bring their attention to the passing motion picture and say, in faltering terms, that all that goes by is a blessing.

A lot of Polish trains have old-fashioned compartments, accommodating six, with three on each bench, facing off. The atmosphere can be tense, for while your average Pole will treat a guest in their home like a God, they will also think nothing of sitting opposite a person for six hours without saying a word. But the atmosphere in those old-fashioned compartments can also be light and casual and chatty, especially if you're prepared to kick things off by saying something stupid like I love you.

Which brings me to the Polish people. I can't claim to have met them all, but of the several thousand I did meet, I have only positive things to report (with the notable exception of a bartender called Ziggy, who all but throttled me for badmouthing *pierogi*).

There was Hubert the dairy farmer, who insisted on giving me a lift home from the ski resort of Karpacz, refused take no for an answer when it came to stopping at his grandmother's house for dinner, before finally offering me a job milking cows on his farm near the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad.

There was Sister Stefania, a senior nun at St Adalbert Abbey near Kraków, where, for about £20, you can get a room for the night, three square meals, and Stefania's take on such matters as Roman Polanski and carp farming.

There was Jerzy, the wizened custodian of a hut high in the southern Beskid mountains, where stray hikers with more ambition than sense are liable to be greeted first with frosty suspicion then with impeccable kindness, the latter in the form of stew and tea and a hand starting the fire.

Then there are the Polish celebs. I fell for them, too. Like Marie Curie, who discovered polonium and radium and won two Nobel prizes in the process. Like Lech Wałęsa, who discovered that a humble worker at a shipyard in Gdańsk can rise to the highest office of the land (and in so doing precipitate the collapse of the Soviet Union and its empire of satellites). Like Witold Pilecki, who discovered what happens when you volunteer to be captured by the Nazis and interred in Auschwitz (he organised a resistance movement and secretly drew up reports about the atrocities which were later shared with the allies). And like Pope John Paul II, who discovered that if you dig deep enough into the pockets of your character, you'll find enough decency to forgive someone who just shot you four times.

On top of its people and places, a country is a constellation of tiny quirks; a galaxy of shifting bits and pieces that, while neither constant nor objective, nonetheless make a solid contribution to a nation's impression, its aura, its romance.

It is a thousand ways to use a certain swear word. It is buying pants by the kilo. It is the length and intensity of a Polish wedding. It is a statue of the pope on every other corner. It is the sense of a country still recovering, still correcting itself, and yet still flourishing. It is a hundred variations of coleslaw. It is the word "no" meaning yes, and the consequent confusion. It is mushroom picking in autumn. It is a penchant for pickling. It is a day set aside for the consumption of doughnuts – Fat Thursday. It is 16 ways of spelling banana, depending on its mood.

I left Poland for reasons that were a touch cowardly. After a year in the country, I was smitten with the place, and I didn't want that to change. I didn't want to put that fondness under too much pressure. I didn't want to give it a chance to unravel or wane. You might say that I upped sticks and left in the thick of our honeymoon; that I wrapped my affection in cotton wool, stowed it carefully in a drawer, and snuck off in search of a new adventure.

I found that new adventure, for the record. It involved a series of budget coach holidays with people three times my age. But that's another love story…

*Ben Aitken's books include A Chip Shop in Poznań and The Gran Tour: Travels With my Elders. His latest, Here Comes the Fun: A Year of Making Merry, will be published by Icon on 25 May. They are available from guardianbookshop.com*

# TRAY TABLES

**Not mankind's greatest invention.**
**But when you're squeezing**
**150 people into a metal tube,**
**they're unfortunately required.**

THERE IS ANOTHER WAY



P&O FERRIES



2

Buzzy cities offer museums of neon, croissants or codebreaking, plus there are mountains, lakes and beaches, great festivals – and piles of glorious food

# 10 brilliant things to do in Poland

*Words: Ben Aitken*

## 1 | Warsaw

Warsaw had been blitzed by the end of the second world war, so the fact that it is now a buoyant metropolis of two million people and came top in Europe's Best Destination poll in 2023 is a bit of a miracle.

For a good-looking lesson in modern Polish history paired with an introduction to the science of illumination, head to the Neon Museum (pictured), a great collection of cold war-era neon signs.

For an introduction to the spirit that's vital to Polish culture paired with an eye-opening half-hour trying a range of vodkas, head to the Museum of Vodka housed in a former vodka distillery. Gawp at the pickled heart of Chopin in the crypt of Holy Cross Church (really, is there nothing the Poles won't pickle in a jar?) and then surrender to a 10-course tasting menu at Epoka, whose award-winning chef has developed modern interpretations of recipes stretching back to the 17th century, such as *bigos* (hunter's stew) made with venison cheeks and served ramen style (menus from £83).

There's a more down-to-earth culinary experience at Soul Kitchen, where the dumplings are lavish, the beef cheeks decadent, and the pavlova sublime (mains from £12).




1

For a memorable stay, the fashion-forward NYX Warsaw has doubles from €100 a night room-only.

## 2 | Head for the hills

Poland has a belt of mountains on its southern border, perfect for skiing, hiking or wild swimming in alpine lakes. Wrocław in the south-west is a good base for the Karkonosze mountains, Kraków in the south for the Tatras, and Rzeszów in the south-east for the Bieszczady range (pictured). A friend of mine raved about her two-day solo hiking trip in the Tatras.

## 3 | Poznań

I have a massive soft spot for Poznań, not least because I used to work in a fish and chip shop in the city (see page 76). Poznań's virtues include its vibrant old town; its lakes; its dancing goats (two mechanical billies make an appearance daily at noon atop the town hall, butting heads 12 times to mark the time); its Rogalowe (croissant) Museum (the city's sweet treat is the St Martin's croissant, filled with white poppy seeds); and the Enigma Cipher Centre (which sheds light on the vital role Polish codebreakers played in hampering the Nazis).

For memorable dining experiences, Concordia Taste does a two-course set lunch inspired by a different region of Poland each week (£8), and 62 Bar and Restaurant offers souped-up local classics on the roof of a Harley Davidson showroom (mains from £10).

For accommodation, the Andersia (doubles from €80 room-only) has a great view and a good breakfast.

## 4 | Ride the trams

Call me a dork, but there are few things I'd rather do with a spare couple of hours than ride a Polish tram. It appeals to the onlooker in me, and the eavesdropper, and the aesthete – and yes, the skinflint too. The number 16 in Poznań is my favourite, as it rounds the cathedral and crosses the Warta River, then skirts the old town and slips by the opera house before pushing north through a thicket of towers in peach and pink to the university, where it pauses, turns round and goes again.

## 5 | Go to a festival

For those seeking cutting-edge contemporary sounds in a post-industrial environment, there's the New Music Festival in Katowice at the start of June. Röyksopp are this year's headliners, and a three-day ticket costs about £65. Later in the month, the Open'er Festival takes place in



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GETTY/STOCKPHOTO; NEON MUSEUM WARSAW; ALAMY

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## Upcoming events

**AI: Should we be worried or excited?**

The Guardian's technology editor Alex Hern and a panel of international experts will navigate the big questions facing us around artificial intelligence.

***Tuesday 23 May***
***8pm-9pm***

**Samantha Irby and Elizabeth Day**

The bestselling author Samantha Irby will join Elizabeth Day for a special livestreamed event to introduce her new essay collection, Quietly Hostile.

***Wednesday 24 May***
***8pm-9pm***

**Polly Toynbee: My family and other radicals**

Guardian columnist Polly Toynbee will discuss her 50 years in British political journalism and her new book, An Uneasy Inheritance.

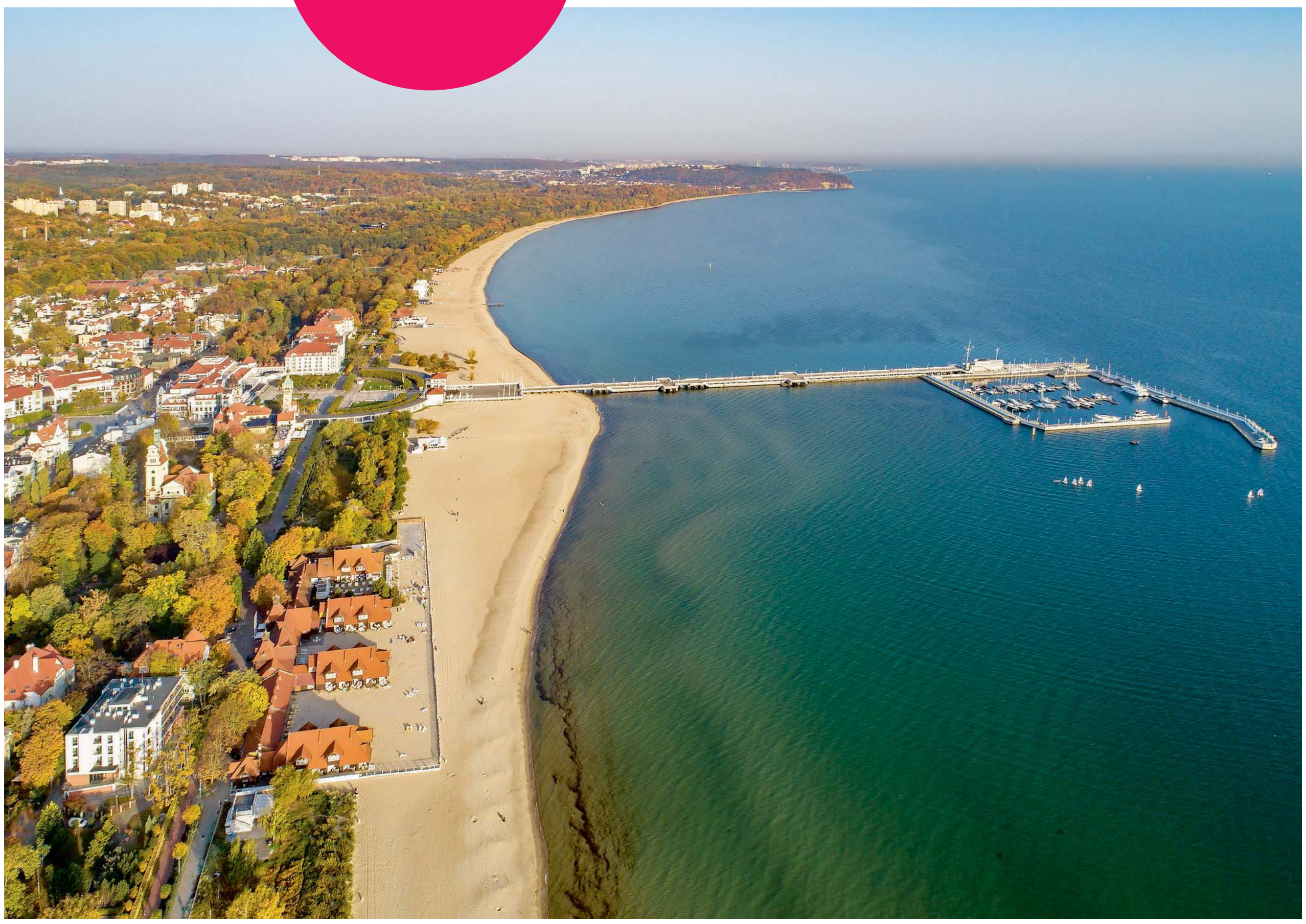
***Wednesday 31 May***
***8pm-9pm***

**Rafael Behr: A Survivor's Guide to Politics**

Why is our politics so toxic and divided? Rafael Behr and writer David Aaronovitch will discuss how we stay engaged without getting enraged.

***Monday 12 June***
***8pm-9pm***

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the seaside town of Gdynia at the end of June with SZA headlining, and Arctic Monkeys and Lizzo also on the bill. A four-day camping ticket costs about £180. Lovers of independent cinema should check out the New Horizons film festival in Wrocław every July.

## 6 | Polish Riviera

Poles aren't afraid of comparisons: Sopot (pictured) is the gateway to the Polish Riviera, Wrocław is the Polish Venice, Warsaw the Polish Berlin, and Konstancin-Jeziorna, a suburban summer resort south of Warsaw, is Poland's Beverly Hills. Sopot, with several miles of golden beach backed by protected dunes has the longest pier in Europe, restored spa-era architecture and it's just a few miles from the historic city of Gdańsk.

## 7 | Eat!

Given a spare afternoon in Poland, I'd find a nice little milk bar (*bar mleczny*), briefly soak up the timeless (and somewhat starchy) canteen atmosphere, then set about stuffing my face.


7

I'd begin with a *gołąbki*, a kind of Polish burrito – mince and rice rolled in cabbage and decked with tomato sauce. Then I'd have a bowl of soup, probably *żurek* (sour rye), which was recently voted the second-best soup in the world, probably for being deliciously sour and smoky and sweet all at once. Then I'd have a portion of the national stew, *bigos* (pictured), which is a slow-cooked riot of cabbage, onion, carrot, apple, smoked bacon, spices, mushroom, sausage, tomato, wine and whatever else is around. (Bigos sometimes translates as "mess".)

I'd somehow find space for bread and *smalec* (dripping), but I won't bother with *pierogi*: for me Poland's beloved dumplings are one of the most overrated things in the northern hemisphere. For pudding, seeing as you asked, I'd have a wedge of *sernik* (cheesecake). *Smacznego!*

## 8 | Find your religion

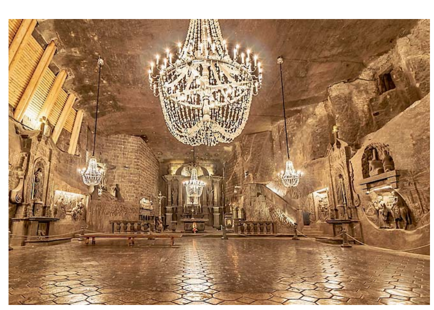
In Warsaw, St John's cathedral is a gothic redbrick whopper and a testament to the nation's devotion and fortitude (rebuilt many times, the latest after the German army blew it up in 1944). In Kraków, Wawel cathedral is a delightful *bigos* of architectural ingredients. Most gobsmacking of all, however, is St Kinga's Chapel (pictured) in the southern town of Wieliczka. Built 100 metres underground and made of salt, it's a genuine marvel, and evidence, were it required, that the Poles will always find a way to pray – even if they're engaged in hard labour down a salt mine.

## 9 | Masurian lake district

As well as healthy hikes, this is the place to rent a kayak or canoe to glide about on any one of the 2,000 lakes in one of Poland's most remote regions, in the north-east of the country. Further east is the Białowieża forest, a vast primeval woodland that straddles the Polish-Belarus border. As well as black storks and wolves, the forest is home to hundreds of bison (keep your distance). Tour operator Wild Poland has more inspiration along Poland's eastern front.

## 10 | Culture

Any trip to Poland is improved by a visit to Łódź – or HollyŁódź as it's known to some. (Roughly speaking, Łódź is pronounced "woodge", hence the hopeful conjunction.) The Polish Film School is based in the city, and it was here that Polanski and Kieślowski cut their teeth. Manufaktura is an impressive art and leisure complex in an old textile factory, and a thought provoking hour can be spent at Muzeum Sztuki, a prestigious modern and contemporary art gallery.


8

GETTY/STOCKPHOTO; ALAMY

## Readers' travel tips
## Poland highlights

### Winning tip
**Toruń's medieval skyline**

Toruń's skyline is stunning, full of red medieval buildings best viewed from the banks of the Vistula River. Highlights are the Baj Pomorski theatre and the Teutonic knights' castle. There are reminders of astronomer Copernicus – his spectacular 14th-century gothic tenement house still stands and is now a museum. **William**

**Karkonosze park hike**

Head to south-west Poland and hike this national park. Weave among glacial lakes and strange rock formations as you enjoy a view looking on to Poland's verdant plains. We stayed at the Samotnia refuge and were stuffed with a dinner of hearty *pierogi*. The day hike from Samotnia to Szklarska Poręba finishes with a refreshing brew at bar Browar Mariental. **Ryan Welborn**

**Glorious glass, Kraków**

Take time to view the beautiful stained glass of artists Stanislaw Wyspiański and Józef Mehoffer along with other masters. The National Museum Kraków has a whole section devoted to Wyspiański's work; there are also many places around the city where his truly spectacular designs can be seen, such as St Francis Basilica, the Stained Glass Museum, Józef Mehoffer House, and Jama Michalika Café. An unmissable treasure trove of beauty. **Berni G**

**Lakes and peaks in the Tatras**

From Zakopane head to the glacial lake of Morskie Oko. Surrounded by high peaks, it's a beautiful spot. If you want to go higher, trails go around the lake and up to the lake of Czarny Staw tucked beneath Rysy, at 2,500 metres the highest point of Poland. **Nick**

**Spinning and weaving, Łódź**

The Central Museum of Textiles shows the everyday lives of textile workers who were employed at the cotton mills of 19th-century businessman and philanthropist Israel Poznański. There are spinning and weaving machines, put into operation by guides who offer fascinating information over the deafening whirring endured by textile workers. **Grace**

*To enter our readers' tips competition and see the terms and conditions, visit theguardian.com/readers-travel-tips (you must be a UK resident to enter). The week's best tip, chosen by Tom Hall of Lonely Planet, wins a £200 voucher to stay at a Coolstays property. This is a selection of tips: see more on our website*

coolstays



Starting in Dickens' Broadstairs, this coastal walk takes in the spectacular bays of Thanet's eastern tip

# How far to the pub? The George & Heart, Margate, Kent

*Words: Ella Braidwood*
*Photography: Christian Sinibaldi*

**Start** Viking Bay, Broadstairs
**End** The George & Heart, Margate
**Distance** 6 miles
**Time** 3 hours
**Difficulty** Easy

## The walk
## Broadstairs to Margate

For nearly a year now, I've been ticking off stretches along the Kent coast. Dover to Folkestone brought dramatic scenery, but noisy traffic on a major road running along much of the route. Whitstable to Herne Bay was more tranquil, though the landscape was less impressive. This route - a nearly six-mile stretch from Broadstairs to Margate - is, I think, the best so far, with no traffic and impressive surroundings.

This walk should only be done at low tide as parts of the route aren't accessible otherwise. There is also a danger of being cut off by the sea, so it's important to check the tide times. (At high tide it can be done along the top of the cliffs instead, though it's less dramatic.) Broadstairs is a 90-minute high-speed train ride from London St Pancras.

I start at Viking Bay, Broadstairs' main beach, where colourful huts line the crescent of sand, with a manmade tidal pool at its southern end. I descend via the central steps, in front of the Charles Dickens pub, one of this town's many tributes to the author, who often holidayed here.

On the beach, I take a wooden walkway to the left, towards pub/restaurant The Tartar Frigate, above which a crenellated grey building can be seen rising from the cliff. This is Bleak House (in Dickens's time it was Fort House): it was once his summer residence, where he wrote much of David Copperfield.

The route leads briefly back on to the road and a view to the left of York Gate, a notable pointed 16th-century archway. I head down a concrete ramp back on to the beach, striding in a relatively straight line with the promenade to my left.

Rugged chalk cliffs await me at Stone Bay. Soon the sand is peppered with grey-blue stones and angry waves lick the jagged rocks at the sea's edge.

I veer around another bend and into Joss Bay a sandy and expansive half-moon that is popular with surfers, and with bathers in summer. Low chalk cliffs frame the attractive bay.

After crossing the bay, I reach Hackemdown Point, a rocky outcrop which projects into the sea, its cratered surface giving it an extraterrestrial appearance. From here, I skirt round to the right of a large concrete wall, to which lime green moss clings, and into Kingsgate Bay, named after King Charles II made an emergency landing here in 1683. "Gate" refers to a gap in the cliffs.

Kingsgate Castle, on top of the cliff,



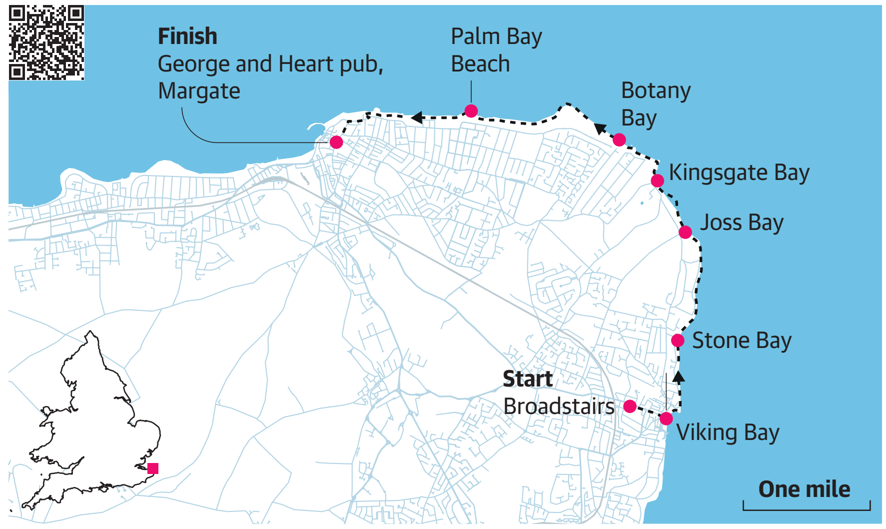





Viking Bay in Broadstairs, left; a chalk arch on Kingsgate Bay, below left; sea trout at the George & Heart, below



**Take the map with you**
Scan the code for the online article with a Google Map




Stone Bay, left, north of Broadstairs; the George & Heart pub and guesthouse, right



was built in 1763 as a stable block for Henry Fox, the 1st Baron Holland. A leading Whig politician, he amassed a huge fortune during the American war of independence, but was eventually forced to resign after speculating with large sums of public money. One petition decried him as "the public defaulter of unaccounted millions".

I walk along this sandy bay – a maroon carpet of seaweed stretching out to my right and several small caves in the cliffs ahead – before I reach one of the walk's highlights: a large chalk arch that frames views of the sea beyond. (It's possible to walk under it, but a nearby sign does warn against standing too close to the cliffs because of falling debris.)

Still following the coastline, I get to Botany Bay, roughly the halfway point and featured in the video for singer-songwriter Shawn Mendes's song There's Nothing Holdin' Me Back. I weave between two large chalk stacks, standing apart from the headland. There are chalk caves in the cliffs, alongside a lifeguards' shelter and a pumping station at the end of the bay.

From here, I head into Foreness Bay, home to a waterski and boat club, at this point taking the easier option of walking along the concrete promenade instead of the sand. A warning sign reminds visitors of the dangers of getting caught by the incoming tide.

Nearing Margate, I stop to eat my lunch at Palm Bay, my legs dangling over the promenade. A couple of huge container ships head across the North Sea before me and an offshore wind farm sits on the horizon. I pass into the last of the bays on this walk, Walpole, where there is a distinctive, rectangular tidal pool. Built in 1937, it is one of the largest pools of its kind in the UK.

I carry on walking until I reach a distinctive mosaic reading "Lido Sands". It was once part of a leisure complex built by John Henry Iles in the 1920s. Iles was also behind Margate's Dreamland amusement park, having been inspired by a visit to Coney Island in New York in 1906.

I make for Fort Crescent then Trinity Square. Finally, I reach The George & Heart, at which point, the sun comes out.

## The pub

Reopened as a pub in 2019 after 12 years as an Indian restaurant, the George & Heart is a revamped 18th-century coaching inn and still has its original stained-glass windows. It's cosy inside, with tasselled lamp shades, exposed brick and plush velvet seating. On a busy Sunday, the crowd spills on to shabby wicker chairs, farmhouse tables and picnic benches outside.

As it's big on roasts, I visit on a Sunday (booking is essential). The Kentish lamb arrives blushing and tender, while the nut roast is decadent and moist. Both are served with a huge yorkshire pudding, tenderstem broccoli, red cabbage and garlic-licked roast potatoes. For dessert, a generous portion of apple and plum crumble topped with buttery broken biscuits is balanced by the sharpness of the fruit.

Among the beers are several from Margate's own Northdown Brewery.

## The rooms

The pub has six doubles (from £95 B&B), some with shared facilities, and a two-bedroom suite sleeping four. As with the pub, the decor is charming, with bright colours (there are shades of pink aplenty), lavish bath tubs and statement rugs.
*georgeandheart.com*

# Puzzle solutions

*(puzzles on page 86)*

**Answers to quiz**
*by Thomas Eaton*

**1** *Queen Victoria.* **2** *Barbour.* **3** *Carbon.* **4** *House sparrow.* **5** *Milk pasteurisation.* **6** *Draughts (checkers).* **7** *Jumping.* **8** *Brazil.* **9** *Characters who don't exist: Russian novella; Nineteen Eighty-Four novel; The Importance of Being Earnest; M*A*S*H; Seinfeld.* **10** *Inspired sculptures by Rodin: Monument to Balzac; The Kiss; Burghers of Calais.* **11** *Medieval football games still played in the UK.* **12** *Novels inspired by Great Expectations: Jasper Fforde; Ronald Frame; Peter Carey; Lloyd Jones.* **13** *Saved from sacrifice by their fathers (in some versions Iphigenia didn't survive).* **14** *Categories of exoplanet.* **15** *Last monarch to die in battle: Richard III at Bosworth; Robert I at Soissons; Adolf at Göllheim; James IV at Flodden.*

**Answers to Weekend Crossword**
*by Sy*

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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A wonderful mill in Wales receives the fleece every two years for carding, spinning and weaving. The ladies jackets and toddler coats – made by a small traditional manufacturer in Sheffield – are of a classic, raglan sleeve design, and are buttoned and loose fitting for ease of wear.







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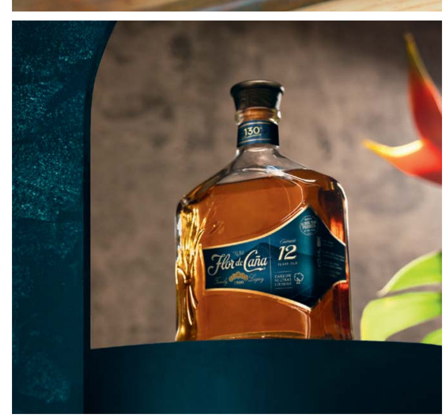
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## The kids' quiz
*Molly Oldfield*

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**This quiz answers questions posed by children – will you get a better score than your parents?**

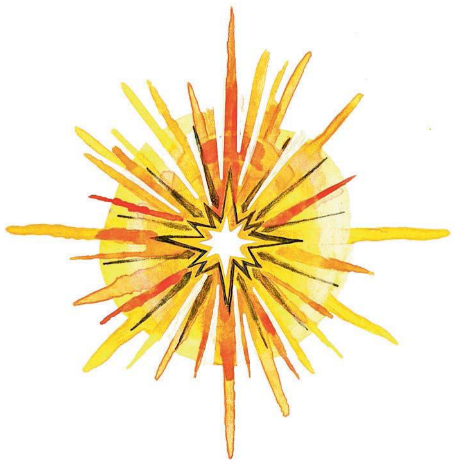


ILLUSTRATION: HENNIE HAWORTH

**1 Patrick, 8, asks: what colour are the hottest stars?**
**A** Blue
**B** White
**C** Yellow
**D** Pink

**2 Adeline, 6, asks: why do mosquitoes bite?**
**A** The females like to drink our blood
**B** Because they know it's really annoying
**C** They bite you so that they can try to lay their eggs on the surface of your skin
**D** It's their way of marking their territory

**3 Santiago, 5, asks: can dinosaurs eat lions?**
**A** Yes, a lion wouldn't stand a chance against carnivorous dinosaurs!
**B** No, lions are the best hunters in the world
**C** If they had existed at the same time, then probably
**D** No, lion meat is indigestible for dinosaurs

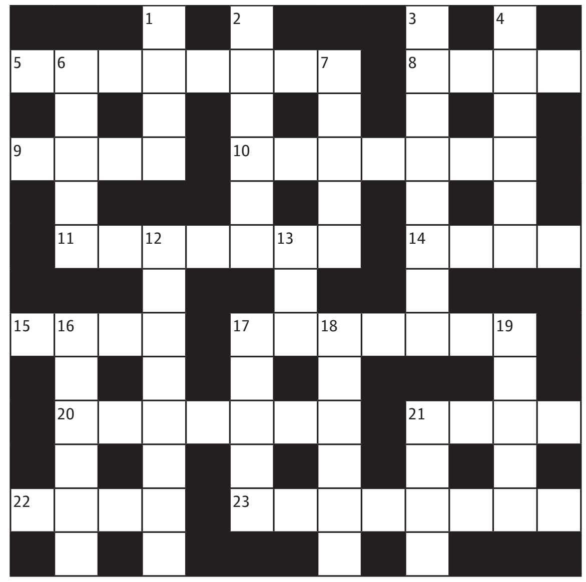
**4 Phoenix, 10, asks: would the moon exist without the Earth?**
**A** Yes, the moon has orbited other planets in the past and would carry on orbiting around the sun
**B** The moon isn't real, it's just a myth!
**C** Scientists still haven't figured out the answer
**D** No, the moon formed around the Earth

**5 Milan, 6, asks: how are bricks made?**
**A** By cutting rectangular shapes out of red stone
**B** By shaping clay in a mould and firing it in a kiln
**C** By cutting rectangles like brownie pieces out of a big slab of clay
**D** By shaping clay by hand and air-drying it

***Answers (no peeking!)***
*1 A. Blue stars are actually the hottest stars! Red stars are the coolest. It's like when you look at a candle flame, the blue part is usually right in the centre, where the flame is the hottest.*
*2 A. Only female mosquitoes bite us to suck our blood for food – they need the protein in our blood to make their eggs. Male mosquitoes drink flower nectar.*
*3 C. There is a gap of at least 60 million years between dinosaurs becoming extinct and lions starting to appear on Earth. If they had been around at the same time, big dinosaurs like a T rex would have been able to eat lions as they were much bigger.*
*4 D. Scientists believe the moon was created when the Earth hit another planet about the size of Mars. They melted and re-formed as one planet, with part of the new mass spinning into orbit around the Earth to form the moon. So, without the Earth, it wouldn't exist.*
*5 B. Basic bricks are made out of clay – with things like sand, lime or iron oxide added – and are shaped in a mould, although sometimes other machines are used to shape them. They are then dried and fired in a big kiln.*

***Molly Oldfield hosts Everything Under the Sun, a weekly podcast (and book) answering children's questions. Does your child have a question? To submit one, scan the QR code above***

## Weekend crossword
*Sy*



**Across**
**5** Rap musical about the founding years of the US (8)
**8** Active volcano in Sicily (4)
**9** The capital of Norway (4)
**10** The .... ..., Channel 4 show hosted by Adam Hills (4,3)
**11** See 16
**14** Katherine ...., Canadian comedian (4)
**15** French cheese (4)
**17** Churchill's aim, at all costs, 13 May 1940 (7)
**20** Sirius? (3,4)
**21** Nickname for the Brazilian president (4)
**22** Israel's national airline (2,2)
**23** Ian McEwan novel (8)

**Down**
**1** The founding queen of Carthage? (4)
**2** Who, according to Churchill, got out when an empty taxi arrived at Downing Street? (6)
**3** Island off the southern tip of Florida – or a Bogart movie (3,5)
**4** See 16
**6** Tea – and an Indian state (5)
**7** "The ..... party": how Theresa May described the Tories in 2002 (5)
**12** Character created by George du Maurier; it has come to mean a manipulative older man (8)
**13** A Belgian king – or the only country with which the UK shares a land border? (3)
**16/11/4** "It is a ...... wrapped in a ....... inside an ......": how Churchill described Russia in 1939 (6,7,6)
**17** ..... Bering, Danish explorer who mapped the Russian far east (5)
**18** An assistant parish priest (6)
**19** Where Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt met, February 1945 (5)
**21** Tracy ...., character played by Grace Kelly in High Society (1956) (4)

**Solutions to Crossword and Thomas Eaton's quiz** *page 83*

## Quiz
*Thomas Eaton*

**1** Which monarch owned 640 dogs, comprising 32 breeds?
**2** Which clothing brand began in the Market Place in South Shields?
**3** Buckyballs are a form of which element?
**4** What has topped the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch for 20 years?
**5** Which food safety measure was pioneered by microbiologist Alice Evans?
**6** Old Faithful, or 11 to 15, is an opening move in which game?
**7** Philippe Halsman famously photographed his subjects doing what?
**8** Which country's flag promises "order and progress"?
**What links:**
**9** Lieutenant Kijé; Comrade Ogilvy; Bunbury; Captain Tuttle; Susie?
**10** Balzac; Paolo Malatesta and Francesca da Rimini; siege of Calais?
**11** Ba'; Bottle-kicking; Scoring the Hales; Uppies and Downies?
**12** Lost in a Good Book; Havisham; Jack Maggs; Mister Pip?
**13** Iphigenia in Greek myth and Isaac in the Bible?
**14** Gas giant; Neptunian; super-Earth; terrestrial?
**15** England (1485); France (923); Germany (1298); Scotland (1513)?

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*A $400 Disney gift card is included for selected Disney Resort hotel bookings with a minimum stay of 5 nights made between 20th April 2023 to 6th July 2023 inclusive, for arrivals from 9th January 2024 to 22nd March 2024, 13th April 2024 to 11th October 2024 & 26th October 2024 to 18th December 2024 to satisfy the offer criteria. To qualify for a Disney gift card, a Disney Resort hotel and a Disney ticket must be purchased together at the time of booking. 1 gift card per booking. Disney's 14-Day Magic Ticket for the price of a Disney's 7-Day Magic Ticket is available for Disney Resort hotel bookings, for eight nights or more made from 20th April 2023 to 9th November 2023 inclusive, for arrivals from 9th January 2024 to 22nd March 2024, 13th April 2024 to 11th October 2024 & 26th October 2024 to 18th December 2024 to satisfy the offer criteria. The Disney Magic Ticket must be purchased at the time of booking. Ticket expires 18 days from first use. Ticket is validated on arrival day at Park gates. The Ticket is non-refundable once validated. Please refer to full Disney ticket terms and conditions for any amend or cancellation policies. This offer may be changed or withdrawn at any time. A Disney dining and merchandise card up to $2100 will be included for Disney Resort Hotel bookings made between 20th April 2023 and 9th November 2023 inclusive, for arrivals from 9th January 2024 to 22nd March 2024, 13th April 2024 to 11th October 2024 & 26th October 2024 to 18th December 2024 to satisfy the offer criteria. To qualify for this dining and merchandise card offer, a Disney Resort Hotel and a Disney Magic ticket must be purchased at the time of booking. Valid for new bookings only for between 5 and 21 nights. All offers are only valid on new bookings and subject to availability. Full terms and conditions can be found at tui.co.uk. All the flights and flight-inclusive holidays on this website are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.caa.co.uk. TUI is a trading name of TUI UK Limited, a member of TUI Group. Registered Office: Wigmore House, Wigmore Lane, Luton, LU2 9TN. Registered in England No: 2830117. ATOL No: 2524. ABTA No: V5126.